IE NEW EXODUS

A Study of Israel in Russia

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From his wife with her love.
13th November 1892

THE NEW EXODUS

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To the Memory of

GEORGE JONES,

The Founder of a Great Newspaper

and

The Lifelong Champion of Good Causes,

This Volume,

Owing its existence, as it does, to the

Deep and Sympathetic Interest

With which the Horrors of the Jewish Persecution

in Russia filled his Last Days,

is reverently Dedicated.

150091

ALEXANDER III

THE NEW EXODUS

A STUDY OF ISRAEL IN RUSSIA

BY

HAROLD FREDERIC

AUTHOR OF "IN THE VALLEY," ETC.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

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THE NEW EXODUS

CHAPTER I

"*PARA DOMOI!*"

EDMUND BURKE confessed, over a century ago, that he knew not the method of drawing up an indictment against a whole people. The task is no easier now than it was in 1775. Moreover, the world's jury, grown callous to sensation and wearied with ever-multiplying claims upon its sympathies, takes, in these latter times, a deal of moving. Not even Burke risen from the dead could hold its undivided attention for a second four days' speech.

On the other hand, the day of the solitary and unaided advocate is past. Mankind is far too busy now to listen for more than the briefest minute to any individual voice. A thousand men toil daily to collate the facts and arguments upon which it passes in judgment over its breakfast cup. The story to be told in these chapters seeks only its proper place among the great mass of accusatory records that truthful observers and inquirers for ten years back have been piling up at Russia's

door. These records are in themselves an indictment—an indictment more solemn, more sweeping, more terrible than exists in written language against any other people. Were the waning nineteenth century a hundredfold more idle-minded and indifferent than the *fin de siècle* cult would have it, still must this indictment compel attention.

My own share in the gathering of materials is represented by a long and painstaking journey through Russia, both within and outside the Pale, for the most part under the guidance of practical men who were able to ensure to me the minimum of wasted time. The tour was made without official assistance, and, I am happy to believe, escaped official notice. This fact prevented my making personal studies of the Czar's domesticity, of M. Pobiedonostseff's piety, of General Ignatieff's urbanity, and of other similarly fascinating features of polite Russia, concerning which so much has been written. The Russia I saw was not polite. It was a Russia which had never done anything more than promise sometime to get civilised, and now for ten years had openly surrendered itself to the engulfing return wave of barbarism. It was a Russia of dark and hopeless ignorance, of drunken incompetency, of frank and even smiling contempt for everything of thought and word and deed that we call honesty. I saw it in cottages, in fields, in churches, camps, and market-places—and everywhere, depressing as the picture was, it furnished the background to a still more sinister scene, that

of a whole race being hunted from its homes, despoiled of its possessions, hounded by the Cossack and plundered by the *tchinovnik*, and all unpitied by any one.

To attempt to deal in any satisfactory way with the whole question of the Jewish persecution in Russia is like setting out to write an Encyclopædia Britannica. The subject is so vast that its bulk fairly frightens one. To tell merely what is being done—what has happened since March of 1891—would require the space of many volumes, and the labour of as many men as there are scores of towns, villages, and hamlets in a section of country stretching from the Baltic to the Black Sea, and containing a population of fifty millions of people. The most industrious gleaning cannot hope to gather the thousandth part of the past twelve months' tragic facts. The scope of the figures staggers the imagination. More families, for example, have been affected by this new and savage enforcement of Ignatieff's May laws and the added ukases than were called upon to mourn the loss or wounding of relatives on either side during the great American civil war. Yet even a comparison of this kind fails to convey an adequate idea of the host of human beings involved in this brutal and wanton persecution.

How much more difficult must seem the task, then, of striving to explain this strange and monstrous excrescence upon the history of our century. To comprehend the position of the Jew in Russia

one must study the Russian, and get to understand the curious qualities and absence of qualities which make him, although nominally master, in reality the intellectual and material serf of all the strangers within his gates—Germans, Jews, Tartars, Finns, Poles, Armenians alike. One must realise, further, that in this present barbaric attempt of the Russian to drive out one of the groups of people who know more than he does, there lies both the whole long story of the effort to civilise Russia, and the final admission that the effort has failed and is abandoned. Truly, a complex subject!

And in starting upon an examination of this tangled and far-reaching web of race hatreds, dynastic ambitions, and religious strifes, it cannot be too clearly kept in mind that this raid upon the Jews is only one phase of a vast national movement. All things conspired to point to the unhappy Jew as the one to begin upon. It will be the turn of the German next. Even now the air is filled with ugly suggestions as to the confiscation of German factories and industrial plants, and new laws are actually coming into force which will compel foreigners to choose between naturalisation and flight. The Finns are already under the harrow. The fact that their autonomy was sacredly pledged to them under the Grand Ducal Crown never mattered for a moment. The pledge was simply broken—snapped over the Imperial knee like a dry twig. A hundred solemn pro-

mises, to which had been given the weight of Ministerial seals and Imperial signatures, were as calmly tossed on the dust-heap when it was desired to drive the Jews from Moscow. Good faith has no meaning in Russia. No assurance, no pledge, no law will avail for an instant to save the German and English properties in Russia, once the Ministerial hand is lifted to seize them.

Upon the banners of the advance guard in this prodigious national movement might well be inscribed Aksakoff's famous words, "*Para domoi!*" ("It is time to go home"). The phrase at the moment thrilled Moscow with new Pan-Slavic raptures. It has come to be, if not the spoken watchword, at least the tacit motto of rank and file as well as leaders.

We talk glibly enough of Pan-Slavism, but rarely define it, even to our own minds. To most persons it signifies in a vague way something about grabbing Bulgaria and Roumelia whenever the next war with Turkey comes, and meanwhile subsidising spies and agitators in the Balkans. In reality Pan-Slavism signifies something incalculably broader and more important to the rest of the world. A big book could be written—nay, the next generation will have many big books written—upon its meaning. When Aksakoff called out "*Para domoi!*" every Russian knew him to mean that it was time to give over the pretence of apeing Western Europe; that it was time to throw to the winds the effort

to appear civilised; that it was time to turn the clock back again to the starting-point of Peter the Great, to undo all that his German successors had done in imitation of Occidental models, to frankly relapse into Slavonic barbarism.

One must go to Moscow to comprehend the strength of this feeling and the tremendous fascination it has for the Russian mind. A dozen years ago it seemed to be the exclusive property of a small though influential group of reactionary thinkers—the Aksakoffs, Katkoff, Ignatieff, and others less well known to European fame. To-day it literally possesses the nation. Those of the educated Russian classes who are too intelligent to be really moved by it, are precisely the ones who most vigorously simulate being under its sway. The feeling is quite akin to that of the child who, having laboriously sat out the long hours of a church service in tight boots and a stiff shirt collar, returns home to tear off these hateful bonds and roll barefooted and collarless in the hay. The Russian is captivated with the thought of ceasing to pretend to be civilised. His is the longing of the young Indian brave at the mission-school to get back again into the breech-clout—to exchange the school-desk and books for forest glades and the chase.

We of the outside world have no notion whatever of the lengths to which this reaction has already gone in matters affecting not merely the Jewish population, but the whole social structure

of Russia. Few, for example, realise that on July 1 of last year corporal punishment was re-established in Russia. The horrors of the knout used to be dilated upon in every book about Russia. No collection of instruments of torture is complete without one of those terrible bunches of leathern thongs, their ends knotted in balls of lead, and curious visitors look at them with as much sense of strangeness as if they came from the Papal Palace at Avignon or the old Binnenhof in The Hague. It is indeed only thirty years ago since it disappeared in Russia, when the Liberator Czar remodelled the judicial system of his country. It is perhaps too much to say that the knout has come back. Such beatings as I have heard of have been with rods. From this to the knout is but a short backward step. If the latter is itself restored, it will appear in company with so many other savage revivals of pre-liberation days that its return will be scarcely noted.

In the same way the old landlord magistrate has come into existence again. After the serfs had been emancipated it became necessary to provide decent legal machinery for the trying of minor cases. Up to that time the "owners of souls" had dealt with petty offences and disputes after their own sweet will, punishing, fining, maiming, killing, quite as they pleased, and with only the barest forms of law. Alexander II, in September of 1862, eighteen months after the emancipation, established by decree a system of

minor jurisdiction, presided over in each district by a justice of the peace (*Mirovoi Sudya*), who passed upon all cases involving not more than 500 roubles ($330), and who, in criminal cases, was bound by an explicit criminal code. Alexander III, on July 1 of last year, 1891, abolished all the justices of peace outside St. Petersburg, Moscow, and a few other large cities, and returned to the old system of Nicholas. Instead of the justice of the peace, there is now a *Natchalnik* of the *Zemstvo*—that is to say, a landlord who has time and needs the place, and who is elected by the landed gentry of the district. This is the gentleman who, during this last awful winter of famine and pestilence, has so ably muddled or obstructed the efforts of the central authorities and the Red Cross Society toward popular relief. Of only one or two of these *Natchalniks* has any good word been spoken by those who have been studying the famine districts. More often they are alluded to as rough despots or hopelessly stupid fools. Occasionally we hear of one like M. Dementieff, *Natchalnik* in Samara, who late last autumn got together 300,000 roubles on the pretext of relieving the suffering in his district, and coolly left the country with the entire sum. It is to these officials that the power of ordering corporal punishment at will has been restored.

This is only one of scores of similar revivals, showing on every side the governing desire to get Russia back again into her Asiatic shell.

The signs of this reaction force themselves upon the attention at every corner in inner Russia. Gentlemen and officers who fifteen years ago affected rationalism in religion, and left the demonstrative part of the Church ceremonial to the monks and the moujiks, now ostentatiously halt before every shrine and church edifice to bow and cross themselves. The pilgrimages to holy places have swollen enormously in volume, and embrace now a well-to-do element which under the last reign they never knew. If this were accompanied by any spiritual awakening inside the Church, or even an increased activity in theological discussion, it would invite more respectful comment. But nothing is more certain than that there has been no spiritual or other awakening. The Russian Orthodox Church—of which something will be said later on—is spiritually and mentally as dry and barren as a sandbank. It exists solely in forms and ceremonies for the intelligent, and in fetiches for the unintelligent. This augmented observance of the ceremonies, everywhere noted by on-lookers, indicates merely a general consciousness that the Church is playing a part in this grand national retrograde movement.

Another indication, perhaps even more significant, is found in the immense proportional increase of books printed in the Russian language. Booksellers who formerly kept a few Russian works, and devoted most of their shelf space to French, German, and even English literature, now see the

conditions quite reversed. The new Russian generation is far less inclined to reading of any sort than was that which flourished under the Liberator Czar, and is also far less well educated, in the better sense of the word. Scholars, students and booksellers, with whom I talked in a half-dozen widely separated large towns, all told the same tale: the demand for serious works was yearly diminishing, and the younger Russians were not learning languages as their fathers did. The principal display in every window and on every counter is of pamphlet translations from Zola, Belot, Richepin, Gaboriau, and other modern French novelists. Next to these in importance come imported editions of these same books in their original French. The literature of strictly native production seems to be almost wholly confined to pamphlets.* No one talks of a visible successor to Turgenieff, Dostoieffsky or Tolstoi.

Even in the army curious effects of this ruling

* A critic, writing to the New York *Nation* under date of October 3, 1891, took exception to my earlier statements upon this subject, and quoted the St. Petersburg *Knizhny Viestnik* (a publishers' organ) to show that of the 4358 works published in Russia during 1890 only 10 per cent. were translations. One may prove anything under the sun by Russian statistics. I sent copies of this criticism to student friends in both St. Petersburg and Kieff. The replies were that I was absolutely right; that the vast majority of the books on philology (455), medical science (372), political science (337), &c. &c., were either text-books or obscure pamphlets; and that M. Struve, the Russian Minister at Washington, had publicly described the intellectual and literary decadence of Russia in terms much more sweeping than mine.

idea that "it is time to go home" are observable. The soldiers — stout, deep-chested, docile, and hardy-looking fellows—are fast getting out of the stiff, pipe-clay routine which the other Czars, in their passion for imitating the German model, insisted on. If there were any geniuses among the military leaders of Russia, they would doubtless have invented before this a series of original Asiatic formations to answer as substitutes for the corps, division, regiment, and squadron borrowed from the hated Teuton. Unhappily, this flight is beyond their intellectual level. They must still have a Guards Corps in St. Petersburg as in Berlin, and use a German manual of arms. But both officers and soldiers are already a long distance away from the standard of discipline that was enforced a dozen years ago. The officers in their uniforms do not scruple to pay open court to the *cocottes* in the public gardens of St. Petersburg, Moscow, and Kieff. They sit with them at the supper tables in the open air, buy wine for them, quarrel with one another for the privilege of their society, and drive away in *droschkis* with them, all without the slightest thought of concealment —and all in full uniform! The private soldiers no longer try to stand erect or carry themselves like warriors. They slouch along at an easy, round-shouldered gait, hands in pockets, and it is a mere matter of taste and convenience whether they salute a passing officer or not. Only a few months ago the case was reported of a young

Russian officer who drew his revolver and shot dead a private soldier who failed to salute him.

A sympathetic Russian explained to me this laxity of discipline which I noted on every side among the soldiers by saying that formerly they were drilled a great deal in all sorts of precise, dry-as-dust German formalities, but this did not suit the spirit of the Slav, and so now that was all abandoned and reliance was placed solely on "moral discipline."

Thus, evidences of the reaction might be multiplied and extended into practically every department of Russian existence. But the sequel will of necessity deal with this subject in detail.

The essential point is that the overwhelming mass of Russians, educated, half-educated, and ignorant alike, are for the moment enlisted under the banner of reaction. If there are dissenters, they hold their peace, sneering in private, but openly throwing up their caps for the march backward. All those who have the intelligence to see what folly it is, joined with the courage to speak their minds, are in Siberia or in exile. So far as public opinion is visible in Russia, it is unanimous. Everybody professes to be in favour of Russia for the Russians, and to be quite satisfied with the measures adopted and foreshadowed to make that policy good.

This absence of criticism is a fatal bar to any general awakening on the subject. The value of any set of ideas, if they are persistently promul-

gated and may not be debated, will naturally establish itself in the public mind—all the more if that public mind is inherently indolent and limited. Thus, Moscow and inner Russia generally has come to believe that the Western civilisation—the civilisation of Germany, France, England, and America—is absolutely corrupt and diseased, and must, from its own rottenness, very soon break down altogether. They ascribe to it nameless abominations, of which Western Europe has hardly so much as an abstract idea. And their editors and spokesmen profess continually the conviction that, when these wretched and effete nations of the West shall have collapsed and perished in their own putridity, the pure and untarnished Slavonic race will inherit and regenerate the earth. The wildest of these frantic teachings takes root somewhere. The broad notion at the back of them—that the Russian race can do great and wonderful things by itself, that it has not thus far done them because its energies have been directed in mistaken channels, and that it is high time now to turn back and begin again *à la Slave naturel*—has taken possession of the popular mind.

Of course this popular mind is a very childish affair. Indeed, the temptation continually arises to find parallels for all things Russian in the fantasies and queer aberrations of childhood. The Slavic brain is nothing if not juvenile. It is invincibly optimistic; it rushes headlong into enthusiastic beliefs founded upon the merest hearsay

or imagining; it invents lies and excuses with incredible swiftness and an entire disregard for probabilities, or for cause and effect; it has no conception of responsibility, of duty, or any other abstract virtue. Withal, it is kindly and ferocious by turn, cowardly in the face of stern power, merry when the sun shines, lazy as the day is long—childlike always.

The bold shamelessness of Russian official lying has long since passed into a proverb, yet it remains still so difficult a thing for the Western mind to lay hold of, that able travellers are to this day deceived on every side. Within the past five years books have been published by English and other travellers, professing to tell "the truth about Russia" which were literally padded from first to last with Muscovite falsehoods. Only last summer, for example, Mr. Arnold White, who had been journeying through the Empire to secure confidential information for Baron Hirsch, returned and gravely reported for facts about Moscow a pack of lies which had been told him by the officials of the Holy Synod, the falsity of which was demonstrated on the first moment of inquiry. He was told, to take only one incident, that the cruelties perpetrated in driving the Jews from Moscow in March of 1891 were due to the mistaken and excessive zeal of "a late Chief of Police," and he repeated this for truth in his report. As a matter of fact there was no "late" Chief of Police at all. Yourkoffsky, the Cossack

adventurer, who did these cruel deeds, had been Chief of Police in Moscow for six years, and was Chief of Police still. Only a child or a Russian officer would venture upon such a lie as this.

This infantile quality has its fullest exemplification in the confidence with which the Russian regards the commercial future of his country, once all the people who know how to conduct commerce have been chased from it. Over and over again, in the official literature of the Persecution, one finds it set forth with the utmost naïveté that Jews and other foreigners were necessary in Russia to open up avenues of trade and establish industries, but now that they have done this they can safely be driven out. The Russian admits frankly that he was not intellectually equal to the task of establishing such industrial commerce as Russia enjoys, but he never dreams of doubting his ability to carry it on now that it has been established. Much less does it occur to him to question his moral right to kick out and despise all those who established it.

Thus we return to the expulsion of the Jews. Undoubtedly they owe it to their nationality that they are the first to feel the effects of the Pan-Slavic upheaval—but they are being put out because they are not Russians, not because they are Jews. The expulsion of the other non-Russians will follow—nay, is already in progress.

It was natural to begin with the Jews. In every imperfectly civilised country—and un-

fortunately in at least one country which regards itself as very completely civilised—the materials for an anti-Jewish movement always lie close at hand. In Russia this unhappy people had from the first lived under extraordinary conditions. A whole thick volume of laws existed, all designed to keep it a race apart. Every moujik knew that the Jew was a pariah, a creature who in official eyes had fewer rights than himself, or even than the despised gipsy. When an ignorant man low down in the social scale finds somebody lower still, mere contact breeds a lust for persecution. Somewhat higher up on the ladder, the small Russian merchant, artisan, and trader had the additional grievance of disastrous competition with the Jew, who could actually add up figures in his head without an abacus, who never drank, rarely took holidays, understood how to buy, and could not be dismayed by hard work. Still higher up, the Russian professional and larger commercial circles had this feeling in a form intensified by the greater magnitude of the competition.

In one sense, the religious antagonism was a less potent factor in Russia than in Germany or Hungary. The Russian of the last reign was but a lackadaisical theologian, and took only less interest in the creeds of those about him than he did in his own dogmas. But with the sombre and sinister revival of ecclesiastical energy which followed the rise to power of Pobiedonostseff, the Orthodox Church was able to add the spirit of

religious intolerance to the commercial, social and racial elements which, under the new reign, threatened Jewish security and peace.

Hence, when a wretched personal intrigue, to be detailed later on, put into certain base minds the idea of a *Judenhetze* in Russia, it was an easy matter to secure anti-Jewish riots. And later, when the Pan-Slavic vision had expanded into a demand for the expulsion of foreigners in general, what more natural than that the crusade should start with the Jews?

The Russians are the excuse-makers of the world. The police had scarcely begun their work of expelling Jews who were too poor to buy temporary immunity before all Russia blossomed with reasons for the expulsion. The Jews were all usurers, money-lenders, vampires who sucked the choicest Russian blood, promoters of dishonesty in business, &c. These charges began in the imagination, but it was not long before the Russians had persuaded themselves of their truth. Every bankrupt Russian merchant, who has misconducted his business with drunken stupidity and indolence for years, will tell you now that he has been ruined by Jewish chicanery; every bad Russian workman, who never properly learned his trade, and has lost every job he ever had through drink, ascribes his lack of work to Jewish competition; every moujik, who is too lazy properly to cultivate his field, and whose labour is mortgaged ahead for two or three years to the local

publican, while his children have neither clothes nor food, feels convinced that his misfortunes are all in some way due to the Jew.

More than that, the Russian Jew labours under the disadvantage of the fact that the large majority of English, German and other foreign merchants and manufacturers in Russia take the side of the Russians against him. This is not difficult of explanation. All commerce in Russia—all financial activity of whatever kind—is in the nature of a game, in which all the people who are not Russians—Jews, Germans, English, Armenians, Greeks, and Tartars—play for the possessions of the Russian, he himself not being smart enough to take a place among the gamesters. In this game the competitors do not like one another, but race prejudice enables the others to more or less unite in a common dislike for the Jew.

What the actual facts are concerning the Jew in Russia, I hope to be able to state with some degree of conclusiveness later on. It is enough here to say that, whatever his faults, they are not those with which the present popular clamour in Russia charges him.

CHAPTER II

THE PARIAH COMMUNITY

PROPERLY to follow what has happened and is happening in Russia, not to speak of the still more impressive events to come, one must first of all realise that all over the empire the administrative power is above the law. It is by the failure to comprehend this that men even of Mr. Goldwin Smith's intellectual rank are led to write and print misleading and mischievous nonsense about Russo-Jewish matters.

In Anglo-Saxon countries, when we speak of a law-abiding community, we mean that the people therein obey the laws and give the officials appointed to administer the law a minimum of trouble. There is no equivalent phrase in Russian, and there is no need for one. That the people obey is taken for granted. It is the officials who do not observe the laws, but who instead use the vast and conflicting jumble of ukases, decrees, and Ministerial instructions as a general basis for doing whatever they want to do. There is no study or science of jurisprudence in our sense of the word. If a Governor-General sees that the drift of Imperial or Ministerial inclination is in a

certain direction, his underlings and all the small officials who serve the courts and police offices of the province make a search and find a thousand and one smart ways of interpreting what is called the law to suit His Excellency's purpose, which, of course, is to keep abreast of the St. Petersburg current. If this current is suddenly arrested, if it backs, shifts, flows off at a tangent, the law as promptly assumes a wholly different complexion.

Moreover, if warrant for any given line of action which seems desirable to the local officials is not to be found at all in the law, the fact does not deter them for a minute. They go ahead without it, confident that there will be no one to bring them to book, and that, even if there were, they can rely upon Ministerial recognition of the fact that their excessive zeal was well-intentioned.

I am not writing at random in this or exaggerating anything. If it were necessary, I could fill a chapter of this book with quotations of perfectly authenticated cases in my notes of administrative actions which had no earthly excuse in law. What law, for example, authorised M. Alexeieff, Mayor of Moscow, during the summer of 1891 to order that no more sick Jews should be admitted to the hospitals of Moscow? This is only one of scores of such incidents, some of which it will be useful to cite further on. And as for grotesquely-strained constructions of the law, now stretched one way to form a pitfall, now wrenched the other way to clutch and fleece the victim, they form a

leading feature of the whole story of the persecution.

For this reason, less importance attaches to the formidable list of anti-Jewish laws which exist in Russia than might be supposed. Three years ago a compilation of them was published at Kieff which covers 290 octavo pages of close type, and of these laws nineteen-twentieths have never been translated out of the original Russian. Since that book was printed there have been enough additional ukases, notes, and rescripts on the subject half to fill another such volume. It would be an incredibly dull official who in all this huge repository of contradictory laws and interpretations could not find new ways of commending himself to M. Pobiedonostseff.

Four years ago a commission was appointed to codify the existing laws and suggest new ones governing the residential privileges of Jews within the empire, and their rights of holding property and engaging in business. This commission, in the spring of 1891, made a report, which all Russian Jews know of by hearsay and refer to as "the sixty-five projects." This report was drawn up by M. de Ploeve, the chief assistant in the Ministry of the Interior, and the chosen penman of the persecution. It is said that the majority of the commission made a different kind of report, recommending more tolerant measures, and that the Czar refused to receive this and took M. de Ploeve's stringent suggestions instead. It is also

alleged that none of the Ministers save M. Dournovo, who is M. de Ploeve's nominal superior, originally favoured the adoption of this minority report.

However that may be, the "sixty-five projects" were hanging like a nightmare over Israel last summer and autumn, while I was in Russia. It was understood that nothing more was needed to make them laws save a formal act of ratification by the Council of the Empire, and the announcement of this was looked for from week to week. Copies of these "projects," surreptitiously obtained, began to circulate through the Empire, from one official to another. A devoted man, at great risk to himself, was able to procure for me one of these written copies, and smuggle it out of the country to me where I waited for it on the Hungarian border. When the task of getting it translated, and of comparing it section by section with existing laws as far as they are obtainable in any language but Russian, had been completed, I found that the mysterious "projects" were really little more than a restatement of previous regulations. What is new in them considerably limits Jewish privileges, and elaborates the machinery for harrying them from country to town once they have been driven inside the Pale. They also provide punishments for even unwitting offenders not previously authorised by the law. But to my knowledge things have been done all over Russia for which not even these new projects afford a warrant,

although, like all Imperially-approved "projects," they have been practically in force ever since the first high officials were able to find out about them.

These "projects" remain to this day unratified. This fact may be due to the Ministerial dissensions of which so much has been heard during the past winter — dissensions which, together with the general disorganisation incident to the famine, and the collapse of the Imperial Exchequer, seem to have paralysed governmental action in many other directions. But even if affairs in Russia had pursued their normal course, it is quite likely that the "projects" would still have remained in a pigeon-hole.

It had been taken for granted that the extreme severities of the past autumn and winter were based upon these mysterious "projects," of which so much was heard and so little known. I find now that this, with the exceptions noted above, is not the case. All this only enforces what was said at the outset—there is no need for laws in order to enable the placemen of the autocracy to harass, persecute, despoil, and expel the unhappy Russian Jew. The leash has been slipped. The whole official pack, from Governors-General down to the poorest Cossack, are in full cry at his heels.

To rehearse a few elementary facts: What is known in Russia as the Pale consists of fifteen Governments, or *Gubernia*. This territory, where Jews are allowed to live and into which they are being chased from all other parts of Russia, was

all stolen by the Russians from other people. What is called Little Russia—the *gubernia* of Tchernigov, Poltava, and Ekaterinoslav — was conquered from Poland in 1670. The Crimea, or government of Taurida, was taken from the Turks in the following century. White Russia—that is, the governments of Vitebsk and Mohilef —came in from Poland on the first partition in 1772. The later partitions brought in at varying times the Polish governments of Kovno, Wilna, Grodno, Minsk, Kieff, Podolia, and Volhynia, while the further dilapidation of Turkey yielded Kherson and Bessarabia. These fifteen governments are the Pale. They stretch from within a few miles of the Baltic Sea, southward to the Euxine, and eastward to the land of the Don Cossacks.

This territory was supposed in 1879 to contain about 25,500,000 inhabitants, of whom 3,000,000 were Jews. I say "supposed," because Russian statistics are wildly inaccurate, and are confessedly made up from tax lists, village registers, estimates of neighbours, and everything except actual counting. No better means exist now upon which to base a speculation as to the entire number of Jews in Russia. The number is placed all the way from 4,000,000 to 10,000,000. Probably the estimate of Paul Dimidoff, whose pamphlet* is of great value on the whole Russo-Jewish question,

* "Juden-Elend im Lande der Romanows," geschildert von Paul Dimidow. Berlin. 1890.

giving them a total of 6,000,000, is most nearly correct. The Jewish rate of increase is almost as abnormally large as that of the French Canadians in Quebec. Hence, we may say, roughly, that thirteen years ago there were 5,000,000 Jews in Russia, of whom 3,000,000 lived in the Pale, something more than 1,000,000 in Poland, and something less than 1,000,000 in Russia proper.

These Jews in the Pale constituted nearly or quite 12 per cent. of the entire population of the Pale. Of the urban population they constituted a vastly greater proportion. In the towns and townships of Mohilef, for example, they were 94 per cent. of all the people; in those of Volhynia, 71 per cent.; Minsk, 69 per cent.; Kovno, 68 per cent., and so on down to 15 per cent. in the towns of Ekaterinoslav.* Thus it will be seen that they were already congested in the towns. In fact, their enforced residence in these fifteen districts made the Pale distinctively a place of towns. In the Pale and in Poland the number of inhabitants in towns was 223 to every 1000 of rural population, whereas in the rest of Russia, excepting St. Petersburg and Moscow, the proportion of town to country was only 59 to 1000, and even in the governments containing the two great cities mentioned it only rose to 221 to the 1000.

Yet even with this tremendous preponderance

* "The Jewish Question in Russia." By Prince Demidoff San-Donato. Translated from the Russian by J. Mitchell. London. 1884.

of Jews in the towns of the Pale, it is estimated that there were from 400,000 to 500,000 Jews living outside the towns. The laws, and even more, the spirit of their administration, rendered theirs a most precarious life. They had legally no right to own land, and they rented only under all sorts of restrictions and liability to plunder. But the overwhelming pressure of competition for existence in the crowded towns created a necessity for their spreading into the country which literally bore down opposition. They paid blackmail to the police and the higher authorities, and continued to live, or, rather, to exist.

Both in town and country existence for these Jews was a problem which never came to an end. Of all the gross misconceptions to which ill-informed writers have lent their minds, there is none at once so cruel and grotesque as that which Mr. Goldwin Smith reflects when he paints the Jews of the Pale as prosperous usurers. I have never seen anywhere else in Europe, not even in the poorer part of Ireland, which I know well, a more terrible poverty than is the rule of their lives. It does not need the evidence of an eye-witness to show the absurdity of the other view—the figures do that. Let one only try to conceive each ninety-four Jews in the towns of Mohilef, for example, waxing rich and fat by lending money to the six Christians who remain. Since Dr. Johnson's islanders earned a precarious livelihood by taking in one another's washing there has been no other such comical

economic paradox. In truth, not a third of the Jews, even outside the Pale, have had money enough to buy railway tickets to the frontier. Inside the Pale the most grinding poverty has always reigned.

Another feature of the Pale claims attention before the question of laws is touched. If we include Poland, it will be seen that its entire western edge is upon the frontier of Germany, Austro-Hungary, or Roumania. This border line is nearly fifteen hundred miles in length. By law a strip thirty-three miles in width (fifty versts) along this whole frontier was marked as land upon which Jews might not live. Thus, a territory about the size of the State of New York was sought to be closed to them. But in the lax days of Alexander II this further attempt to bottle up the Jews in the towns of the Pale also failed. As they had pushed their way into the rural districts, so they slid past the policeman, greasing the palm outstretched behind his back as they went, into the interdicted frontier zone.

Here, as in the country part of the Pale, they lived under constant liability to police raids and official exactions; if not in terror of their lives, at least at the daily mercy of every one in authority, and subjected to ceaseless blackmail.

We have, then, 3,000,000 of Jews living in the Pale, of whom five-sixths were huddled together in 114 towns, in four of which they were over 80 per cent. of the population; in fourteen from 70 to 80

per cent.; in sixty-eight from 50 to 70, and in twenty-eight from 20 to 40—none of them wealthy towns or centres of rich industries—and one-sixth lived outside the towns, dependent daily upon the whim of rapacious officials. In any case existence would have been difficult for a people thus forcibly restrained. It was made almost impossible by a great volume of hostile laws.

In addition to the ordinary taxes borne by all Russian subjects alike (and these the heaviest to be found anywhere in Europe), a whole series of special taxes were invented and enforced against the Jews. There was a tax on every animal slaughtered according to the Jewish or *Kosher* rite, and another upon every pound of Kosher meat afterward sold from it; these imposts made meat cost a third more to the Jews than to other people. A percentage tax was levied by the Government upon all rents of houses, shops, &c., received by Jews, and on the profits of all factories, breweries, vinegar manufactories, and other industrial establishments carried on by Jews. A heavy legacy duty was exacted upon all capital bequeathed by Jews. Printing presses owned by Jews paid annually for a licence. The Jewish head of a family had to pay a special tax for the privilege of wearing a skull cap during family prayers, and the very candles, which every Jewish housewife must light Friday evenings, yielded a revenue by taxation to the Russian Government of £28,000 per annum.

All these taxes are still levied, and all the other impositions to be mentioned are still in force. I speak of them in the past tense only to show what the Pale was like before the May laws added despair and choice between flight and death to the original burdens.

If a Jew became converted to Christianity he received a money payment of from £2 to £4; if he was married, and his wife declined to follow him to baptism, her refusal *per se* divorced her, and she might not marry again, but her husband could take a new wife on the morrow, and, moreover, could baptise, against the deserted wife's will, all her male children under the age of seven. Precisely the same privileges were extended to the Jewish wife who should become a convert.

There could be no synagogue in a town containing less than eighty Jewish houses, or house of prayer in one with less than thirty Jewish houses; and the robbery of plate and other effects from these was not sacrilege. Jews who held public worship or prayer in any other place than the synagogue or legal house of prayer were liable to imprisonment.

Jewish youths of the age of twenty-one were stripped of practically all the safeguards and legal reservations which enable Russians to escape military service. No Jew could be a member of the Recruiting Committee which makes up the conscription lists. The ordinary rules exempting young men from service who were the sole

supports of families only occasionally applied in the case of Jews. Moreover, worst of all, if in a certain district the number of Jewish recruits presenting themselves fell below the proportion which had been expected, enough Jews could be taken from the exempt class to make good the deficiency.

Let us pause at this to note a peculiarly characteristic Russian trick. These conscription lists were (and are) compiled upon the basis of the village or district registers. The way in which these are kept in itself suggests a whole chapter on Russian administration. It is enough here to point out that at its birth every male child is put on the registers by the doctor, but if he dies his name can only be taken off by the certificate of the village priest or pope. This affords one of the means of livelihood which the pope watches most closely and employs most profitably. Unless the dead urchin's name is removed from the register, the family is liable to produce him, or an equivalent, as a recruit when the twenty-one years have elapsed. But in the case of Jews the pope cannot certify to the death of a child. The parent must apply in person for a death certificate to the Governor of the province and bring witnesses. This means a long journey and great expense, which not one in a score can afford. The result is that many names are carried on in the registers to the military age of Jewish boys who died in infancy. It was for this that the law quoted above was

made, by which this bogus deficiency may be made good by seizing other Jewish youths throughout the district.

Thus it comes about that, while the Jews constitute only 3.95 per cent. of the population of European Russia, the army conscriptions for a series of twelve years (1875–86) show the average proportion of Jewish soldiers to be 5.97 per cent.

Yet there is no lie of which Russian writers and apologists are more fond than that the Jews continually evade their military duties. The truth is that, by a device of counting dead men, they are called upon for much more than their proper share of the annual recruiting force, and the very operation of this trick is made a reproach to them. As for asking for military enthusiasm among the Jews, let it not be forgotten that no Jew can become an officer in the Russian army, or even an officer's servant, and that the Military Regulations are studded thick with insulting and injurious references to and restrictions upon him and his religion.

The restrictions upon trade, upon intercourse with other markets, upon the holding of property, upon practically every relation of life, under which the Jews of the Pale suffered twenty years ago were literally without number. The legal limitations alone fill a volume; they were everywhere mixed up with a sliding scale of illegal exactions which the local authorities imposed for their personal benefit.

In substance the Jew could do nothing at all

without paying blackmail. The humblest Jewish artisan—for example, a tailor—could be raided by the police if when he made a coat for you he brought it to you with the buttons sewed on. There was a law which said that Jewish artisans should sell only the product of their own handiwork. "Very well," the police would ask, "do you pretend that you made these buttons yourself?" To such a question there were only two answers: one was to yield in despair and surrender the trade-guild passport which it had taken years to gain; the other was to give the policeman three roubles.

Thus underhand dealing became a law of existence. So far as the power of a despotic empire could do it moral degradation was thrust upon this people. Money became the one thing which could make life tolerable—money for the police, money for the informer, money for the local magistrates, money for every harpy and blackguard with the will and power to molest. Whenever men engage in an unhealthy and unnatural competition those with the worst and most dangerous qualities rise to the top, trampling the weaker and softer ones under foot. We have seen something like that in Wall Street, where there are no laws abridging virtuous happiness or making dishonesty the condition of life. In the terrible Jewish Pale the wonder is that any religion, any charity, any rudimentary notion whatever of honesty survived. The truth is that the great bulk of the Jews of the Pale, like the

hideously poor everywhere, remained a simple and devout people, clinging doggedly to their despised faith, helping one another where they could, and keeping up virtues of temperance, family affection, and chastity which their Russian taskmasters scarcely knew by name.

But in those days there were methods of escaping from the Pale.

The Jews of Western Europe, even in the darkest days of blind mediæval persecution, had their brethren dwelling in the palaces and castles of the rulers of the land, clad in rich raiment and commanding respect for their long beards from even the ribald men-at-arms—I mean the physicians. In Russia in our own century the Jewish doctor made the pioneer experiments with that ticklish affair, the toleration of a Slav. After him came the Jewish scholar, then the Jewish merchant prince. All this will be traced in detail further on. It is enough here to say that at last, by the edicts of March 16, 1859, Nov. 27, 1861, and June 28, 1865, the Czar Alexander II threw all Russia open to Jews who could fulfil certain conditions.

Besides the Jewish physicians and surgeons, graduates of universities, and merchants of the first guild, who still retain the right of residence outside the Pale, skilled artisans were now allowed to move into Russia proper, and settle where they pleased. They did this under restrictions and conditions of espionage and arbitrary attack which in any free land would seem incredible, but to

them this enlargement of their horizon was so wonderful that they still refer to the time as the "golden age" for Jews.

In no place, for example, were they allowed equal civic or religious rights with Russians; nowhere were they permitted to forget what indeed the law of 1876 explicitly reminded them of—that "Jews are aliens, whose social rights are regulated by special ordinances."* But, subject to the old laws, which now for fifteen years were but languidly enforced by the local officials, nearly or quite a million Jews came to live in St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kieff, Nijni-Novgorod, Smolensk, and the other larger towns outside the Pale. Here they settled themselves in something like security, educated their children, extended their business operations, and multiplied after their kind.

For these fifteen or twenty years life was perhaps in some small degree easier in the Pale, as well. The Jewish population, which previously had been increasing with dread rapidity, became about stationary under the reduction by this outlet of eastward emigration. The ruling poverty was scarcely lessened, because the best workmen and the most active spirits were those which had strayed off into Russia proper. But there was a little more bread to eat for those who were left behind, and, under the influence of a kindlier atmosphere wafted from St. Petersburg, the burden

* "Law upon Status," vol. ix. note 7, § 835. 1876.

of blackmailing officials pressed less heavily upon them.

It was a season of stagnation inside the Pale—sorrowful enough for any of us to contemplate, but representing in retrospect now an almost ideal peace to the inhabitants. It was a time of hopeful energy, of high educational and professional distinction, and of growing aspirations and achievement to the Jews in Russia outside the Pale. The story of how they reached this promising position, and of the effect it had upon their character as a race, and upon the conditions about them, will be told in its place, and I trust will be thought worth the telling.

The story of how, suddenly and without warning or reason, this work of a score of years of toleration and intelligence was at a stroke undone; of how hundreds of thousands of people were and are still being torn from their homes, swindled and robbed of their possessions, and driven like criminals into that present pen of horrors, the Pale, or beyond the borders of their native land, it will be difficult to tell with either completeness or adequate force.

CHAPTER III

THE BARBARIAN AND HIS STORY

The traveller, making his slow way in summer over the vast, sprawling, sparsely settled continent called Russia, is struck by nothing else so much as the weird likeness presented everywhere to the more backward agricultural districts of the United States. The fine dry air, the splendid sunsets, the majestic movement of the rolling clouds, are all American ; so, too, are the unspeakable country roads, the grey, old, unpainted wooden houses and sheds, the well-curbs with long reaches, and the huge piles of cordwood bordering every road. The very locomotives have bulging smokestacks, after a fashion now almost forgotten in America, and fill the rural atmosphere with the pleasant scent of burned hard wood. The railway stations and the buildings about them are all of wood, decorated with stereotyped patterns of carpenters' ornamental scroll work, and painted with that single priming coat of ochre which one associates always with the temporary structures of a picnic ground. The forests are of birch and ash. Water melons are everywhere for sale, and the fields are white with buckwheat. The panorama

from the car window is literally crowded with suggestions of the New World.

Russia is indeed a new world—so new as to tread upon the heels of the hindermost thing in old worlds. Watching and pondering its varying manifestations, I could never rid myself of the thought that it was a kind of America in which the early civilised settlers had been overwhelmed and absorbed by the aborigines. Everywhere one got the sense of departed glories, of vanished arts and forgotten knowledge. To the genuine aims and works of a real race had succeeded the squalid views and surface purposes of a mongrel and half-caste people, through whose feeble and fickle hands everything was slipping back into barbarism.

There was a different Russia once—a Russia which moved quite abreast of Christian Europe, which in art and architecture, in skilled industries and in general learning, was not inferior to the England or France of its time. The Northman Viking dynasty which Rurik founded at Novgorod and which his children enthroned at Holy Kieff was as western in spirit as that of Charlemagne. The three daughters of Yaroslav wedded the Kings of France, of Norway, and of Hungary, and his grandson took for wife Gyda, the daughter of the English Harold. In that far-off time architects, painters, workers in mosaic, and teachers and scribes were brought in great companies from Greece to the Courts of the Russian Princes, and art and letters flourished there as they did

not flourish in Saxon England or Carlovingian Germany. The Greek mosaics still decorate the walls of the *Sophieski Sobor*, or cathedral of St. Sophia at Kieff, a building founded by Yaroslav in 1017. The tomb of that Prince, in a neighbouring chapel, shows much more art and skilled workmanship than the so-called tomb of Athelstan in Malmesbury Abbey, or any other western carved remains of that period.

It is even on record, established by the pictures in the manuscript Chronicle of Nestor (A.D. 1285) and other contemporary works, that in those days the dress of the Russians, nobles, merchants, and peasants alike, was practically that of Western Europe.

The change began when, early in the thirteenth century, the Tartar hordes of Ghenghis Khan burst across the Ural Mountains and overran Russia to the Dnieper, killing 50,000 people in Kieff alone, and devastating the land. Thereafter the House of Rurik for more than three centuries waged a desperate and continuous warfare against these succeeding waves of barbaric invasion. The history of every individual town in Old Russia through this 300 years' nightmare is made up of conflagrations and massacres. The dynasty of Rurik may be said to have died thus fighting, for when Ivan the Terrible finally crushed the Tartars, it was only to clear the ground for domestic anarchy, in the darkness of which his line perished.

The Russian who emerged from this anarchy wore his shirt outside his trousers. This badge of reversion to Asiatic standards, to which he has steadfastly clung ever since, is strictly symbolical. The old Russia of the saints and martyrs, of the Yaroslavs and Vladimirs, was definitely gone. We cannot tell how deep was the soil in which those early fruits of civilising art and literature sprouted. Perhaps it would have exhausted itself in any case. As it is, the Tartar wars burned it into utter and hopeless sterility.

The close of these wars and of the obscure and wasting confusion which followed, brought to view, as I have said, a new Russian—clad like an Oriental, and sunk in more than Oriental ignorance and degradation. Ethnologically he did not know who he was—and to this day he has not discovered. He seems in truth to have been an amalgam of all the lowly elements which had survived those awful centuries—a mixture of Lett, Finn, Lapp, Cossack, vagrant Slav of a thousand different tribes, all coloured and tainted by the savage licence of ten generations of Tartar conquerors. He spoke varying jargons of a debased Slavonic language. Of the highly elaborated Byzantine system of Christianity—which, after the final separation from Rome in 1054 evolved a far more complicated dogmatic theology than the Latin church knew—he had retained almost nothing, but had become merely a worshipper

of sacred pictures, which is all that he is to this day.

Three generations of strong Romanoffs—Michael, the founder, his son Alexis, and his son Peter—devoted something over a hundred years to the attempt to civilise this new Russian, and bring him into the fold of European nations. The first two of these Czars laboured chiefly to establish the foundations of the throne to which their family had been called, to systematise representative and legal institutions throughout the land, and to restore some sort of spiritual life to the nominal Christianity which had survived. The third, that amazing Peter the Great, had vaster dreams. He built St. Petersburg as a window through which his people might study Europe. He compelled married Russians to abandon the acquired Oriental idea of secluding their wives, and enforced their unveiled attendance upon the "Assemblées" which he instituted. He made his subjects shave their beards. He dressed his army in the wigs, three-cornered hats, and broad-skirted coats of Western warfare. He created a navy, and visited half the Courts of Europe to learn new tricks of civilisation. From first to last, the paramount idea in his strange, wild, tumbling brain was to drag Russia forcibly out of the arms of Asia, and make her European. While he lived, the work seemed to be well done. When he died it collapsed like the proverbial house of cards.

The Romanoffs practically ended with the great Peter. There had been four of them, all good men, and three much above the average of men. There followed now thirty-eight years of pitiful waste and retrogression, during which two vicious young male idiots and three loathsome elderly drabs in succession astounded Europe by hitherto undreamed-of spectacles of buffoonery, crime, ferocity, and animal lust enthroned. At the end, what problematical drops of Romanoff blood remained in existence were to be found in the veins of a peculiarly vile and disgusting young Duke of Holstein-Gottorp, whose mother was supposed to have been the great Peter's illegitimate daughter. This German Duke was made Czar as Peter III, and a few months later was murdered by his wife, a German Princess of the house of Anhalt-Zerbst, who now herself ascended the throne as Catherine II.

During all this time—indeed, from a period long before the accession of the Romanoffs—almost every Sovereign, good or bad, strong or foolish, had added something to the already huge expanse of Russian territory. From the fall of the Byzantine empire to the destruction of the Teutonic knights, through all the weary centuries of mediæval warfare, pillage, and smashing of dynasties, Russia has steadily annexed territory right and left, north and south. How Catherine the Great still further augmented this vast domain by the spoliation of Poland, or how she strove

with her notable powers of mind and will to carry forward Peter's task of Europeanising Russia, need not be dwelt upon here.

No drop of Romanoff blood flowed in the veins of her descendants, the five Czars who have filled the throne since her death in 1796. The pretence was scarcely made at the time that her son, Paul, was actually the child of his nominal father; no historian treats it now as even a probability. Mirabeau and other observers of the Court in the next generation have left amusing accounts of the precautions taken to prevent the madman Paul from being the father of a new imperial line. His wife, a Wurtemberg princess, seems to have made no secret of them, and the paternity of the handsome Nicholas, at least, was always popularly connected with an Alsatian grenadier of humble origin but lofty destinies. However that may be, the Czars since Catherine have been wholly German. They have behaved like Germans, creating a prodigious bureaucracy in imitation of Teutonic models, dressing and drilling their soldiers in German fashion, forming all the details of their Court after German notions of what a Court should be. Alike under mad Paul and the sentimental Alexander I, under grim, stalwart Nicholas and the romantic Alexander II, the work went on of striving to Europeanise Russia. Though each pursued this ideal in his own peculiar way, their ruling desire was the same—to confirm and solidify Russia's place among civilised nations.

It requires a mental effort to realise that we now confront a Russia which, after 200 years of reluctant shambling and shuffling along under the whip on the road to civilisation, stops short and declares that it wants to go back—that its true affinities are with Asia, not Europe.

Moreover, those who hold the whip are now themselves of the same opinion. The moujik and the small Russian merchants and artisans have never wanted to be civilised. It is a new thing, though, for them to find that their masters in St. Petersburg feel that way too. Under such conditions the backward movement has already attained a tremendous momentum.

A strange figure in the human gallery is this moujik, who, stubbornly and placidly resisting for two centuries all the efforts of a powerful autocracy to make him something different, remains to-day just the man he was when the Tartar invasions ended and the Romanoffs began to create the modern Russia. He still wears his shirt outside his trousers, in silent protest against the pretence that he is a European.

If he were really as far away from us as he thinks he is and desires to be, one might find much in his curious character to like and to dwell almost tenderly upon.

The childlike qualities so markedly developed in most Slavonic peoples find their fullest expression in him. He is, moreover, an exceedingly docile and kindly-natured child. He bears with

uncomplaining patience, in all his weary pilgrimage from the cradle to the grave, an accumulation of burdens such as no other people in the world are acquainted with. He dislikes work with all his heart, yet tramps through life on the treadmill of toil ordained for him without protest or bitterness. When he gets drunk, which is whenever beneficent chance affords, he leans for hours against a fence or wall, smiling gently at the passers-by. If he makes any demonstration, it is to throw his arms about some other moujik's neck and kiss him. The drunker he is, the more affectionately fraternal he becomes.

Lifelong communion with the vast flat-stretching plains of his country, with its enormous tracts of uninhabited land, of marsh and low-lying forests, has made him a silent man. Nothing is more surprising to the observer in Russia than the spectacle of two or three hundred moujiks going to or from their work, or even out upon a holiday, from whom no sound whatever proceeds. Great throngs of thousands will assemble at Moscow or St Petersburg to watch a procession of ikons or a military review, and preserve absolute noiselessness for hours. Paradoxical as it may seem, they are a talkative, even garrulous, people by instinct. But their conversation is limited to the dialogue. Two moujiks alone will talk each other to death. Three moujiks together are reserved. A half-dozen will say next to nothing at all.

Doubtless this queer trait reflects the universal,

omnipresent burden of suspicion under which their lives are passed. They are never sure that they are not outside the law, because the law means only the personal disposition of the individual policeman or small official toward them. In the cities, for example, the moujiks who traverse the principal streets all walk in the middle of the road. Noting this in St. Petersburg, I commented upon it to an English friend long resident there. He told me that at the Christmas time last year, when the great shop windows of the Gostinny Dvor were filled with their richest holiday display, he saw a moujik, or labouring man, attracted by a show of gaily-dressed dolls, come up on to the sidewalk and approach the window to look. A policeman roughly bade him be off, and the moujik, taking off his cap in apology, crept humbly back again to the middle of the road. No doubt that man will go through life without once questioning the existence of a law forbidding him to look in shop windows, if, indeed, he ever arrives at the point of distinguishing between law and the whim of a policeman.

Although the traveller in Russia gets a great idea of the variety and appetising scope of the Russian cuisine, the moujik lives very badly. The present terrible famine has only made him a little worse off than he was before—the margin between him and starvation was already so pitifully slender. His staples of food are the *kasha*, a sort of thick gruel, mainly of buckwheat, baked in a bowl, and

eaten with grease; the *schtchi* or soup of a white cabbage peculiar to Russia, eaten both fresh and sour, and rye bread. He knows little or nothing of the taste of meat, save occasionally when he is lucky enough to get a little piece for his soup. He consumes great quantities of weak tea, but rarely tastes sugar in it, for the reason that the tariff and bounty swindles combined make sugar cost five times as much as it does in England. He drinks *vodka*, a raw and deadly spirit, by the pailful when it is given him, and habitually spends a large share of his pitiful earnings in buying it. One of the most melancholy and hopeless features of the existing famine has been the universal certainty that the moujik, if he was given relief in any portable form, would at once march off to pawn it for drink.

He has, as a rule, a stiff, coarse, mud-coloured beard, and wears his thick hair cut short and shaved at the neck, but very long in front; in imitation of the portraits on the ikons, he parts it in the middle, which imparts to even the greatest ruffian an air of sweet gentleness deceptive in the extreme. The older men have exceptionally heavy and shaggy eyebrows.

The moujik wears a pink shirt—a peculiar tint of pale red which never varies—and wears it all exposed, like a tunic, belted at the waist. His big bagged trousers are tucked at the knee into bootlegs. These boots become to the eye an even more familiar symbol of Russia than the red shirt.

The first thing one notices after the Russian border has been crossed is that every one wears high boots—the customs officers, the train officials, the railway porters, the cabmen, the soldiers, the policemen—on every side nothing but high boots. Even the country women wear them when they do not go barefooted.

The rural moujik, who represents five-sixths of the population of the empire, lives in a little unpainted wooden hovel, rarely built with a second story, and thatched with straws. These shanties are clustered together in hamlets, in groups of fifteen or twenty. Many miles will intervene, as a rule, between this rustic village and the next—miles of wild, flat land, probably unbroken by even a road, and without fence or wall or other sign of habitation, much less a house.

His communal system of land division and his dependence upon the decisions of the Mir, or village Parliament, need not be entered upon here. The careful explanation of all this which Dr. Mackenzie Wallace made fifteen years ago has been widely studied, and still remains the best statement of the matter in existence. The trouble is that the moujik, whom Mr. Wallace even then suspected of not turning his emancipation to the best possible advantage, has since gone steadily backward. As I have pointed out broadly that the Russia of the fourteenth century was more civilised than the Russia of the seventeenth, so it is unhappily true that the

moujik of to-day is a much less thrifty and prosperous creature than the moujik of 1875.

To some extent this is his own fault. His passion for drink and his childlike inability to see the value of consecutive application have led him into the vicious trick of mortgaging his labour whole years ahead. The Government encourages him to drink, because the *vodka* tax is one of the principal sources of official revenue. But equally harmful to him are the protective tariff laws, which make everything he has to buy twice or thrice as dear as it is anywhere else, and beyond that almost the whole burden of direct taxation falls upon his overloaded shoulders. This poverty-stricken wretch, who when times are bad or harvests fail is daily brought face to face with starvation, has to pay an annual passport tax of five roubles—about $3—to begin with, and his land, house, and other taxes make up an aggregate at which the poor man in any other country would stare in open-eyed amazement.

His great poverty at home and the nomadic instinct in his blood make the moujik a notable wanderer. Very often he is in a way an artisan as well, and picks up a little work in various towns as he passes. Wages, however, are so low in Russia—the latest report on the subject assumes that while an English cotton spinner, working 10 hours a day, earns 70 roubles a month, the Russian cotton spinner, working 12 hours

a day, earns 19¼ roubles a month*—that the most marked success in securing employment hardly raises a strolling moujik above the level of pauperism. Many trades are like that of the carpenter, chiefly in the hands of travelling bands who go from place to place, put up houses for those who want them, and then roam elsewhere. These carpenters, working bareheaded in the open air, perform marvels of skill with the adze, which is often their only tool. If trades unions were not sternly forbidden by law, these capable craftsmen would be a prosperous people. Even as it is, they seemed the most contented men in Russia. While at work they sleep herded together in rough little shanties put up for temporary use by themselves, and share everything, wages included, in common. In the long twilights of the North the traveller sees their cooking fires coming out one by one on the vast, desolate landscape like the first evening stars in the sky.

Less skilled labourers also go about in companies seeking employment as roadmakers, harvesters, or farm hands, living meantime in much the same way. These itinerant bands, when they have been long enough together, sing in concert at their work. It is said that the stay-at-home moujik now rarely does this. The soul of music

* Report from the British Embassy at St. Petersburg on "The Condition of Labour in Russia." Summarised in the *Times* of January 21, 1892.

has been scared and frozen from him. He used to have a musical instrument of his own, as national as the cymbal in Hungary, the pan-pipe in Roumania, and the guitar in Spain; nowadays he knows nothing but the German concertina.

These groups of wanderers, moving at will over the immense tracts of sparsely-populated country, include also the pilgrims, of whom through the year a half million are on foot in Russia, and the tramps, if, indeed, there can be drawn a satisfactory line of demarcation between the two. And now—not for the first time in Russian history, indeed, but threatening results novel to our generation—there is added the sinister spectacle of the remnants of whole communities, with their children and their cattle, roaming gaunt and wild-eyed across the never-ending plains, driven under the lash of famine and the plague.

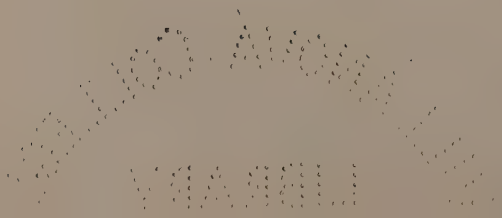
I have lingered thus, at length, over the moujik because he is the foundation upon which all things truly Russian are built. His character and condition furnish the key to the entire Russian situation. The relatively small class of Russian petty traders, master artisans, and other townspeople not of the educated orders is made up of the moujik with his shirt worn inside his trousers. There is very little other discernible difference.

This class is a small one, because it is racially artificial. The Slavonic—or at least the Russo-Slavonic—character does not lend itself to the development of what in England is called the

RUSSIAN PEASANT TYPES

(Government of Smolensk)

LIBRARY



middle class. There is the moujik, and then nothing indigenous between until you come to his master. What does intervene is chiefly not Russian at all.

The history of modern Russia is full of confessions that the Russian by himself is "no good." The three strong monarchs of this period, Peter the Great, Catherine II, and Nicholas, all laboured hard at the task of colonising the Empire with people from other lands, by whose example in industry, thrift, and intelligence the native Russian might profit. In turn Dutch, German, Swedes, and Swiss were brought in and established in villages or on the soil as models. The experiment in one sense succeeded; these strangers prospered and flourished beyond expectation, branching out into new fields, creating commerce and industries which had not previously existed, and thereby enriching the State as well as themselves. But in only the smallest degree can they be said to have served the original purpose of their Imperial promoters. A certain infinitesimal proportion of the native element was caught up by the current of activity they set in motion, and spurred into imitation. But the overwhelming bulk of the native population declined to learn or imitate or be in any wise affected. Thus to this day you may see German agricultural colonies settled as far back as the great Catherine's time, with neat and comfortable buildings and closely-cultivated fields, the proprietors of which are all men with

money in the bank or out at interest; while next to them are Russian farm hamlets made up of filthy hovels, with fields tilled in the most slovenly and half-hearted manner by moujiks, who in their wildest dreams could not imagine themselves being free from debt.

This points the fact at which, perhaps too slowly, we have arrived, namely, that the commercial and industrial activity and prosperity of Russia are almost wholly in the hands of people who are not Russian. It is not alone that the business of St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kieff, and Odessa is principally conducted by people whose fathers or grandfathers crossed the frontier. The great annual fairs, of which that at Nijni-Novgorod is the best known, and the innumerable minor fairs at which, in true Oriental fashion, supplies and wares are still concentrated and distributed, are alike dominated by everybody rather than the full-blooded Russian.

The same thing is true outside of trade. If a Russian landed proprietor stands out among his fellows as a successful farmer, if he secures good returns from his estates and gets his rents paid regularly, in nineteen cases out of twenty he has a German steward. It need hardly be added that this steward, in the very act of deserving well of his employer, will have made himself bitterly disliked by the moujik.

Here is struck the keynote of all that we are considering. The Russians as a whole lack the

qualities which, from the standpoint of Western civilisation, command success. They see the alien wax prosperous and commercially powerful in their own country, where they grow constantly poorer. They are said by those who know them well to be the most amiable people in the world; their amiability would have to be superhuman to stand such a test as this.

Among the strangers within the gates who monopolise the commercial activity of Russia and struggle together for its rewards, the Jew is naturally foremost in attracting attention. He is first of all marked off from the others by an arbitrary cleavage of race, religion, and blood prejudice. Beyond that, as we have seen and shall still more in detail observe, the law has fenced him round with restrictions peculiar to himself, rendering him in all men's eyes a suspect creature, like a ticket-of-leave man or a registered harlot. Still further, the limitations placed upon him have forced him to work in a field where whatever he does must be unpopular, and where his success in securing even existence must seem a sort of crime to the rest.

The ground having thus been cleared, and some idea, meagre and imperfect as it is, having been given of the external conditions of the question, it will be possible hereafter to keep more closely to the subject of the Jew in Russia and his tragic story.

CHAPTER IV

BEGINNINGS OF THE RUSSO-JEWISH QUESTION

THE Jew represents at once humanity's oldest and least familiar fact. The records which he embodies visibly before us in his curled hair, in his eager eyes and bended nose, in his gestures, his utterance, the peculiarities of his family and religious life, belong to the very childhood of the race. We feel or simulate a tremendous interest when the palace tomb of another Rameses is dug out from under the drift of desert sands, or a new triumphal tablet of some forgotten marauder king is unearthed from the dust heaps of Nineveh. Our library shelves are filled with the literature of these efforts to grasp the likeness of these dead peoples, to fathom the secret of who they were and where they went to. Our scientists measure skulls and compare jaw-bones and wage with one another an endless war of words to solve for us the identity of the Hittites, the origin of the Assyrians, the disappearance of the Egyptians.

All the while we have with us a people older than any of these vanished races, to whose real history we pay very little attention indeed. The Old Testament, we know, and braggart Josephus

may still be the reluctant resource of boys in Puritan households of a Sunday afternoon. But the connected story of this ancient folk has not to this day, save in Graetz's massive German work, been intelligently told. Yet how superbly strange and impressive a romance it is!

The Jews are the sole survivors of antiquity. With the calm, meditative gaze of a tent-dwelling people, they watched the dawn of human history. They knew and gave a name to that mysterious first race which went off into the darkness as the shadows lifted—that unknown elder son of the night for traces of whom we now blindly grope—the "Canaan" of Scripture, the Turanian of modern hypothesis. The Jews saw Chaldea, Assyria, Babylon, Media, Egypt, Phœnicia, Greece, Carthage rise, flourish, and fall. They saw Rome tower up in the West; expend the greatest effort of its vast power in smashing and levelling Jerusalem, and then go down itself. They saw one by one the Byzantine, the Gothic, and the Frankish Empires soar skyward, darken the heavens with the wings of dominion, and tumble to earth again. They saw Spain withered up by the flames she herself had lighted in the *auto da fe* of the Inquisition.

Persecuted by all, cursed, feared, quarantined, fettered by all, the Jews have survived all. One need not look alone in Asia Minor for peoples whose practical extinction they have witnessed. Three centuries ago the Grand Duke of Lithuania

was a powerful monarch in Central Europe, strong enough to make himself King of Poland. As late as 1566 the Lithuanian nobles in Diet assembled decreed that Jews should wear a yellow head-covering to distinguish them from Christians. Last winter a friendless emigrant girl was discovered here in the streets of London speaking a language none could understand, though the linguists of several learned institutions were applied to. Finally an amateur philologist wrote a letter to the papers describing the sounds of the girl's speech, and this led to the discovery that she spoke Lithuanian. The gentleman who wrote solving the mystery began by explaining to his readers where Lithuania was!

Only one small phase of this race's wonderful history comes properly within the scope of our inquiry. It is a common popular error to assume that what is called "the dispersion" was incidental to, and consequent upon, the fall of Jerusalem. Four centuries before that triumph of Titus there were large and influential colonies of Jews in all the important cities of the East. Alexander the Great was deeply interested in them as a people, and gave them many privileges not extended to other conquered races within his vast empire. His successors, especially the Ptolemies in Egypt, inherited and even emphasised this attitude, until there were said to be a million Jews in the city of Alexandria alone. Exaggerated as this estimate obviously is, it serves to indicate

how generally the Hebrew race must have been distributed throughout the immense territory which the Greeks held by conquest long before the Christian era.

History and legend throw a great deal of light upon the character and achievements of some of these earlier colonies. We are peculiarly rich in records of the *rôle* the Jews of Alexandria played in civilising that part of the world, and, later, in influencing that strange, evanescent outburst of Arabian and Saracenic culture* from which to this day we draw so much unsuspected inspiration. We know, too, how strong and popular a force the Jewish residents of Rome exerted even in the days of Augustus.

It is only in Russia that we get next to no trace of their original settlements and earlier history. Perhaps this is not to be wondered at, for the story of the Russians themselves is wrapped in myth and fable up to the tenth century. It is apparent, however, that there were Jews inhabiting the basins of the Volga, Don, and Dnieper fully 500 years before Christ. At the time of the coming of the half-legendary Viking Rurik, in 864, the Jews were an important element in the population along these rivers, and in the east and south of what is now known as Russia, and had been for ages before Russians as such were heard of.

* "History of the Intellectual Development of Europe." By John W. Draper, M.D., LL.D. Vol. i. ch. xiii. New York. 1876.

In the Crimea there are, at Chufut Kaleh and Mangup, cemeteries of the Karaïm Jews, with tombs far antedating the Christian era. The monuments here, and the ancient parchments preserved at Chufut by the Rabbi Fircowicz, and in the Fircowicz collection in the Imperial Public Library at St. Petersburg, tell a story unique in the history of Judaism. The Hebrews settled here actually converted the barbaric pagan hordes of the Khazars to their religion in the eighth century, and the larger part of the Karaïm Jews in South Russia to-day speak the Tartar language among themselves. They are, however, very few in number—perhaps not more than three or four thousand. Madame Novikoff did not allow this to deter her from denying that the Russians treated their Jews badly, and then, when confronted with facts, explaining that she referred to the Karaïm Jews and not the schismatic Talmud Jews, as if these latter were an unimportant minority, instead of outnumbering the others 1000 to 1.

This brings us to the grand theological question with which Jewish history is so dishearteningly entangled, and which, however briefly, we must touch upon. I have spoken of the conversion of the heathen Khazars, whose realm extended from the Caucasus to the Don and Volga, and whose kings thereafter professed the Jewish faith, as unique in the records of Israel. It need not have been, were it not for the fact that the Jewish

religion was in its essence a national creed. The policy of its priests and exponents was entirely one of exclusiveness. With this solitary exception of the Khazars, proselytism to the Jewish faith has been unknown.

It is, of course, useless to speculate upon what might have happened had the spirit of Judaism contemplated a propaganda among Gentiles. The Jewish Jehovah reigns now in men's consciousness wherever the idea of one God exists—among Mohammedans not less than all varieties of Christians—dethroning Bel, Jupiter and Woden alike. The Jews, however, have had little or nothing to do with this world-wide extension of their monotheistic idea. They kept their Jehovah for themselves, and never dreamed of preaching Him to outsiders. Rome, with its addition of the doctrine of the Trinity, and Islam, with its addition of the Prophet, divided the great propaganda between them.

This fact bears a curious relation to our immediate theme, because it is recorded that when Vladimir, seventh in descent from Rurik, and the first authentic figure in Russian dynastic history, decided to forsake the heathen gods of his Norse fathers, he gave serious consideration to the idea of embracing Judaism. From this it would seem that the Jews settled in Kieff and the Ukraine, far away from the centres of population of their race, and influenced by their success with the Khazars, had developed a missionary spirit. Whatever

their attitude may have been, Vladimir finally chose Christianity instead, and is now enrolled among its saints.

It has always been noticed that the conditions which produce the most luxuriant growth of saints provide the largest measure of unhappiness for the Jews. Christianity had not reached its fifth generation in Russia before it had a calendar with scores of native saints and had chased all the Jews out of Kieff. This first persecution dates back to 1110, under a monarch whose wife was the English Princess Gyda. There was nothing unusual about it. Indeed, it furnishes proof that Russia had, during those four generations, taken great strides toward civilisation as Western Christendom understood it. Bear in mind that this was the pious century in which the authorities of Toulouse accepted a large sum of money from the Jews in commutation of the privilege of Christian citizens to strike them in the face on the streets during Eastertide.*

Thereafter for centuries we get no glimpse whatever of the Hebrew in Russia. We may be sure, though, that during the long nightmare of the Tartar invasions it was looked to that he got his full share of the woes and anguish which the unhappy land suffered. How terrible this share must have been we can guess from the fact that the mediæval Russian Jew, unlike his fellows in every other country, has left no written sign. We

* Vaissette's "History of Languedoc."

know absolutely nothing of his story during those darkened ages.

Meanwhile the Jew of Poland emerges into the light of history. At the beginning of the sixteenth century there were computed to be 200,000 Hebrews in the various provinces of Poland and Lithuania. Some had been settled there for centuries, coming through the German and Austrian States from Italy, Spain and France; others had been driven or had escaped thither from Russia. They enjoyed exceptional privileges, as Jewish rights went in those days—had entire religious freedom and tolerably broad civil liberty. The spectacle was a unique one in Europe, where Spain's savage crusade with stake and rack seemed much the more natural and proper thing. Jews in other lands thought of Poland as a veritable Land of Goshen. So many German Jews crossed the frontier and settled there, to escape the persecutions and levies of their own petty Princelets and robber Barons,* that their language, in the corrupted Hebraised German known as Jiddish, became the speech of the race.

This happy toleration was too good to last. Under it the Jews had largely lost their exclusiveness, and lived side by side with the Christians in entire amity, and were artisans, merchants, and farmers like the rest. The reproach of usury, cast upon them and earned by them in other countries where persecution drove them from more

* Stobbe. "Die Juden in Deutschland." 1866.

honourable pursuits, was not deserved or heard in Poland.* But, as the power of the Polish throne diminished, and the authority of the nobles and clerics increased, matters began to wear a different face. The Jews, after many generations of friendly equality and frank community with their neighbours, found themselves legislated once more back into the vicious old circle of being forced to do certain things and then hated and abused because they did them.

Then came the upheaval of the Russo-Tartar-Cossack wars and invasions (1648–67) ending with the treaty of Andrussoff, whereby the second Romanoff Czar, Alexis, obtained Smolensk and the Ukraine. This was the country in which Jews, as I have said, had lived for two thousand years. The Czar at once drove them all out. Thereafter all was misery.

There succeeds now a period of nearly 200 years, filled with acute disquiet or active oppression for the Jews. The refugees from the Ukraine who had settled in Little Russia were expelled in 1727. No Jews from without were allowed to enter Russia upon any pretext. The few physicians and other professional men of the excluded race who did manage to remain in Russia were in continual jeopardy of insult and expulsion. Over and over again Russian statesmen who were anxious to develop the resources and trade

* Professor S. Bershadsky. "The Lithuanian Jews." St. Petersburg: 1883.

possibilities of their backward and barbarous land, hinted at the advisability of bringing in some Jews. The Imperial will was resolutely opposed.

In 1743, for example, the Senate recommended that Jewish traders should be allowed to enter Riga and Little Russia on temporary visits "for the promotion of the welfare of the Empire and the development of commerce." The Empress Elizabeth wrote with her own hand on the report: "I seek no gain at the hands of enemies of Christianity."* When the broad-minded Catherine II ascended the throne these efforts were renewed, but she too resisted them, and says in her Memoirs, "their admission into Russia might have occasioned much injury to our small tradesmen."† She was too deeply bitten with the Voltairean philosophy of her time to have, or even assume, any religious fervour in the matter, but though in 1786 she issued a high-sounding edict "respecting the protection of the rights of Jews of Russia," the persecution on economic and social grounds continued unabated.

By this time it will be seen the laws did, however, recognise the existence of Jews in Russia. The explanation is that the first partition of Poland and the annexation of the great Turkish territory lying between the Dnieper and the Dniester had brought into the empire such a vast Hebraic

* Observation No. 8840. Continuation of Vol. xi. of Code of Laws.

† The Zaria Journal, Vol. vi. "Catherine as an Authoress."

population that any thought of expulsion was hopeless. Holy Russia could keep herself uncontaminated no longer. The thief was compelled to submit to the pious discomfort of keeping the unholy part of his plunder along with the rest.

The rape of Poland and the looting of Turkey had brought two millions of Jews under the sceptre of the Czar. The fact could not be blinked. They were there—inside the Holy Empire, whose boast for centuries had been that no circumcised dog could find rest for his foot on its sanctified territory. To an autocracy based so wholly on an orthodox religion as is that of the Czars, this seemed a most trying and perplexing problem.

The solution they hit upon was to set aside one part of the empire as a sort of lazar house, which should serve to keep the rest of it from pollution. Hence we get the Pale.

Almost every decade since 1786, the date of Catherine's ukase, has witnessed some alteration made in the dimensions and boundaries of this Pale. Now it has been expanded, now sharply contracted; this city and that has been exempted from the laws governing the territory about it; deeds have been made lawful in one of its provinces which were penal offences in the next; lifelong residents have been "decanted," as the old Burgundian phrase went, from one district to another—all in the most wanton and whimsical fashion, according to the freak of a despot or the

interest of a Minister. To trace these changes would be to unnecessarily burden ourselves with details. It is enough to keep in mind that the creation of the Pale was Russia's solution of the Jewish problem in 1786, and is still the only one it can think of.

Side by side with this naïve notion that Holy Russia could be kept an inviolate Christian land in the eyes of Heaven by juggling the map, there grew up the more worldly conception of turning the Jew to account as a kind of milch cow. Traces of its dawn may be discerned in Catherine's later years, when Jews were allowed to enrol themselves as merchants in certain towns and enjoy the privileges given other people on condition that they paid double taxes. The local consistorial organisation which they had received from the Polish kings was, alone among all their institutions, retained, avowedly because it made the collection of these unjust taxes easy.

Later this view of the possible profits to be derived from the Jew came to be expressed with utmost frankness. In 1819 Jewish brandy distillers were allowed to go into the interior and settle "until," as the ukase said, "Russian master distillers shall have perfected themselves in the art of distilling." They availed themselves of this permission in great numbers, and at the end of seven years were all summarily driven out again, a new ukase explaining that "the number of Christian distillers was now sufficient." The Imperial

ukase of July 29, 1827, speaks of the laws about the Jews as "Government measures adopted for deriving State advantages from this race."

The past century's history of the Jews in Russia is made up of conflicts between these two impulses in the childlike Slavonic brain—the one to drive the heretic Jew into the Pale as into a kennel with kicks and stripes, the other guardedly to entice him out and manage to extract some service or profit from him. Now one, now the other, of these notions has from time to time obtained ascendency, as whim dictated or need compelled. On occasion the two appear together, yoked side by side, yet pulling in opposite directions. It is to this that the Russian laws about the Jews owe their wild and chaotic contradictions, and their inextricable jumble of confusion as to what may and may not be done.

The Panslavists of Russia nowadays sum up all their arguments against the Jew in the word "exploitation." It has come to be a part of the Russian language. A conversation in Russia about the Jews would be impossible without it. Those who use the word so glibly seek to convey the idea that the Jew is being driven out because he has "exploited" everybody—the noble, the landed proprietor, the merchant, the moujik. This allegation has been made so steadily that I daresay a great majority of Russians now actually believe it themselves. Certainly the opinion of the outside world has been largely influenced by it.

The sober truth is that it is the Jew who has been "exploited." I have shown how frankly the Russian Government used to confess its purpose of turning the Jew to account—sternly curtailing or abolishing all the natural rights which would minister to his own happiness or welfare, but using him wherever he seemed likely to be of service to his Russian neighbours or to the Government.

It was in this strictly utilitarian spirit that the keeping of taverns and rural grogshops throughout Poland and the Pale was put into the hands of the Jews. The fact that some of them still remain in this business is one of the chief reproaches levelled at the whole race by the Russian anti-Semites. But no one explains that they were put into this business, first by the great aristocratic proprietors and then by the Government, for the admitted reason that they alone among the population could be trusted to themselves to keep sober the while they sold drink to others. Both the Imperial revenues and the incomes of landed proprietors had for their chief item the tax and profits on the drink traffic. Both the Finance Ministers and the big landlords have always been anxious to increase rather than diminish this traffic. The special Imperial Commission of 1812, appointed to consider the advisability of forbidding Jews to retail *vodka* in the villages, reported that the Jew was most useful in that capacity, and that if he was sent away the business would

fall into the hands of the native moujik, to the destruction of business and moujik alike.

In the same way, one hears continually of the Jewish usurer. To believe the average Russian's talk, all the money-lending in that whole great empire of debtors is done by the Jews. As I have said in a previous chapter, this is wild nonsense. The rich Jewish usurers in Russia can be counted on one's fingers. But the significant thing is that these big money-lenders and, to use an American provincialism, "note shavers," have always been hand in glove with the Russian authorities. They are still powers in the land. Nobody has heard a word about their being expelled or even troubled. The reason is that they are systematically "exploited" by the Russian officials.

A curious story told me partly in Kieff, partly in Odessa, illustrates this. One of the oldest and most distinguished native families in the Ukraine is that of Kotchubey, the princely head of which is the best remembered of Mazeppa's victims. The Princes of the house of Kotchubey are now much better known in Paris than they are in their ancestral Poltava. The last of them to live on his estates in old Russian fashion was Prince Victor Kotchubey. An elderly English gentleman who has lived since youth in Little Russia told me that some thirty years ago he was in the office of an English firm which was introducing agricultural machinery in the South One day there entered

a tall, fine old gentleman in a silk hat and dressed in the height of the London fashion. He spoke English perfectly, without even an accent, which greatly delighted the young British clerks. They were still more charmed to learn that he was Prince Kotchubey, the chief proprietor of the district. He ordered one of the machines to be taken to his estate for trial, and expressed courteously his pleasure at learning that these smiling young English clerks would attend this trial on the morrow.

They went, anticipating the most sumptuous hospitality. The trial began without the Prince. Soon thereafter appeared on the scene an old man dressed in Russian moujik fashion—huge boots, a tunic-like shirt open at the throat, a fur cap, and with a whip in his hand, who scowled about him and brusquely questioned the clerks in Russian. With difficulty they recognised him for the Prince; they begged him to speak English, and, when he refused, to allow them at least to reply in English. He roughly told them that if they could not speak Russian they had no business in Russia, and roundly abused them and their machine, which, deeply crestfallen, they took back with them. Later, when a friend asked the Prince if this account of his treatment of the English youths was true, he replied: "Yes, it was my fantasy."

The heirs of this old savage were, after the fashion of their land, stupidly prodigal and waste-

ful youngsters. They got into difficulties. A Jew named Michaelowitz, living at Vannitsa, and said to have begun life in great poverty, lent them some money. Other loans succeeded, with renewals, interest accumulations, &c., until ruin stared the Kotchubeys in the face. Then some of their advisers took the matter up, and discovered that Michaelowitz had been guilty of gross frauds. Suit was begun against him, and also a criminal action, brought by the judge of the district. He was in prison some days before he got out on bail. He hastened off to St. Petersburg, where Ignatieff was then Minister of the Interior. The next thing was that the judge who was prosecuting Michaelowitz found that the case had been taken out of his hands and turned over to a judge in Odessa, who was Ignatieff's friend. Michaelowitz was now promptly acquitted, having been his own solitary witness. Shortly thereafter Ignatieff turned up as the owner of one of the Kotchubey estates, valued at 300,000 roubles, and which Michaelowitz is said to have grabbed upon a loan of 125,000 roubles. To-day Michaelowitz is thought to be worth 3,000,000 roubles.

This kind of Jew stands in no fear of molestation. He has friends, confederates, partners at Court. The Jewish brothel-keeper, the Jewish receiver of stolen goods, the rich Jew of any questionable variety, has not been so much as menaced by the expulsions: he has friends among the police. These excrescences upon the Hebrew community

are cited by every Russian who defends the May laws in justification of them. It is characteristic of the whole tragic farce that this handful of men, whose delinquencies are quoted as warranting the persecution of a nation, are themselves not persecuted at all.

During the Napoleonic wars, and peculiarly at the period of the invasion, the laws against the Jews were very largely relaxed, and Czar Alexander I made a personal appeal to them for help against the French. It was given, and in return the Imperial promise was passed that they should be given equal rights with other Russian subjects. But by 1822 this pledge had been so completely forgotten that the same Czar abolished most of the consistorial organisation, with its independent communal jurisdiction, which they had enjoyed since the days of the Polish kings.

In 1825 Nicholas ascended the throne. Within a year he had earned from the Jews that sinister title of "The Second Haman," by which Israel still recalls him. The events of his reign, intimately connected as they are with what the world to-day indignantly witnesses under his grandson, will be studied in the ensuing chapter.

CHAPTER V

UNDER THE "SECOND HAMAN"

THE Jews of Russia called Nicholas "The Second Haman." They could think of nothing more opprobrious. The Book of Esther was, and still is, by far the most familiar of their sacred writings. The story of the victory of Mordecai appeals powerfully to their indomitably hopeful fancy. Scrolls containing it, and ornamented by marginal pictures of gibbets and hangmen, are everywhere to be found among them. Every Jewish boy in Muscovy is proud of being able to recite the names of Haman's ten sons without taking breath. The gallows upon which they were all hanged looms ever darkly triumphant in the Russo-Jewish imagination.

Undoubtedly the thirty years' reign of Nicholas, from 1825 to 1855, was filled with special hardships for the Jews. At the time they thought nothing could be more terrible than their position. But looking back upon it now, it does not seem so bad. In those days they at least could comprehend the intentions and aims of the despotism which oppressed them.

The Czar Nicholas, a man of immense personal

force, tireless energy, and original ideas, which from their very narrowness ran deep and strong, had an intelligent theory about the Jews. He wrestled for thirty years with the task of carrying out this theory, but, though a great number of Jews got hurt during the process, he accomplished very little else.

Nicholas succeeded to an inheritance wasted by war and weak misgovernment, and generally run to seed. He threw himself with his whole strength and pride of character into the work of regenerating the empire. His notions of what regeneration meant were, of course, very curious; they might easily have seemed backward and reactionary to one of the Pharaohs. But he was at least sincere and devoted and consistent in his labours. He permitted nothing to be done of which his intelligence did not approve simply because it had been the habit to do it. The most awful brutalities of his reign had a reason of some sort behind them.

This powerful and resolute Czar had, as has been said, a theory about the Jews. He recognised their exceptional mental qualities and their economic value to the State as no other European Sovereign save Napoleon had ever done. He believed that they could be made of the utmost use to Russia if—and this "if" was the key to his whole attitude—they could be cured of their religion. The first half of his reign was devoted to harsh bullying, to persecutions in novel forms; the latter half brought milder devices and more specious tricks—but cudgelling and coaxing had

alike for their end the breaking down of Judaism as a creed and race caste.

Nicholas had an essentially military mind. He began his propaganda against Israel through martial channels. In April of 1827 he issued a ukase rendering Jews liable to military conscription like other subjects. Unlike other subjects, the Jewish recruits had to serve twenty-five years without ever being eligible to promotion. But, though no instructions were committed to paper, it became speedily understood in the army that the Czar desired heavy pressure to be put upon the Hebrew soldiers to win them over to baptism. This pressure became universal, and naturally took the shape of cruel torment to the obdurate.

But this process was too slow. Accordingly Nicholas invented a scheme of military colonies or schools, to be planted in the remote South, to be devoted to the combined conversion and martial training of Hebrew youths. This was an adaptation of the plan of settling regiments of the line about in the farm lands among the Crown serfs, which General Arakcheieff had proposed and carried out under the preceding reign. These colonies were an absorbing topic of agitation in Russia during the last days of Alexander I, and gave cause to numerous riots which were suppressed with bloodshed. The Jews now think of Arakcheieff as having also been the agent of Nicholas, in the establishment of the Jewish colonies. The facts are, however, I believe, that

Nicholas did not like him or employ him, and that he died in retirement some few years after that Czar's accession. It was only the idea that was indirectly derived from Arakcheieff.

Under this pretty plan, press gangs were now deputed to prowl about the Pale and forcibly abduct Jewish boys of from five to ten years of age. These were carried off to the southern settlement camps, and, after a violent baptism, were trained to the use of arms and brought up as soldiers. Jewish boys are, however, extremely precocious in the matter of theological learning. Their religious education begins so early that at eight their convictions are quite as well grounded as those of their elders. Some of these lads used to resist baptism. Then it was the commandant's thoughtful custom to put them in solitary confinement and feed them on salt herrings, without water to drink, until they consented to accept the baptismal rite.

I myself talked with a venerable man in Moscow last July, who was one of these "colonists," as they are called, in his youth, and who was brought by the herring test to the baptismal font. He was very proud of his forty-five years' service in the army, and carried himself with the dignity of a veteran of the Grenadier Guard. But neither this nor his juvenile apostasy prevented him from devoting his whole time to the succour and assistance of the poor Jews, then as now being hunted out of their homes in Holy Moscow.

Some of these Jewish urchins, thus forcibly converted, rose to rank in the Russian army. More than one of the generals of Nicholas are said to have come from this class. Those were days when generals were not necessarily educated men.

This trick of baptising boys and giving them new names, and the steady pressure so roughly exerted upon the Jewish conscripts, render it difficult to trace either the extent to which the army of Nicholas was filled with Hebrews, or the measure of admixture of Jewish with Russian blood throughout the Empire. It is known that Nicholas paid great attention to this press-gang method of gaining young Jewish recruits. They were most valuable, because the great landed proprietors, who were supposed to offer each year for enlistment a certain proportion of their serfs who had just reached the age of twenty-one, habitually bribed the recruiting committees to accept worthless and decrepit moujiks of forty-five and fifty years. As the term of service was twenty-five years the ranks were being continually depleted by the failure of these worn-out serfs to keep up with the rest.

But it was not alone through the machinery of the army that the proselyting screws were put upon Israel. In every walk of life rewards were busily dangled before the eyes of Jews if they would forsake Judaism. The local officials, eagerly interpreting and putting into execution the desires

of their master, did abominable things. Sometimes they also did comical things. An elderly rabbi told me that even so late as the days of the Crimean war he remembered policemen stationed at the corners of the streets leading to the Jewish quarter in his native town, their business being to catch Jews as they passed and cut off with scissors their long earlocks, or *pies*, and the skirts of their caftans, or long-tailed coats.

Nicholas, too, made numerous serious efforts to plant Jews upon the soil as agriculturalists. The story of these attempts is one of the most melancholy in the whole unhappy records of the race—at once melancholy and grimly grotesque. We all remember the scene in "Great Expectations" of the little boy who, scared out of his wits by the apparition of the mad old spinster in her wild bridal array, hears her awful voice bidding him get down on the floor and play. In the same fashion the wretched Jew, physically feeble, poverty-stricken, underfed, cooped up in the crowded ghetto of his town, densely ignorant of even the names of plants and farm implements, was suddenly commanded by an imperial voice of thunder to be an agriculturist.

Great colonies of Jews, sometimes numbering hundreds of families, were now gathered up promiscuously, transported across to the desolate prairie lands of Novorossüsk and dumped down upon the unbroken soil to thrive by agriculture. In any case the experiment could have promised

scant success. As it was managed, it became simply murderous. A staff of officials, almost as numerous as the colonists themselves, was appointed to control the thing. Each family was supposed to be granted 175 roubles, but of this the officials gave the family only 30. The rest purported to have been expended in buying land, farm machinery, &c., and building houses. But seven-eighths of it was really stolen, and such colonists as did not die on the road found only groups of shanties not fit for pigs, and implements which broke in their hands. Here, under the control of brutal officials who knouted the incapable, but could not instruct or advise the industrious, these unhappy town Jews died of epidemics or starvation. The chief digging they did was the digging of graves.

The report of M. Stempel, who was superintendent of the Ekaterinoslav settlements, made in 1847, and which was not specially sympathetic to the Jews, presents an almost incredible tale of suffering.* It is quoted from the official documents in Prince Demidoff's book, and pictures the colonists as arriving at the beginning of winter, to find a cluster of wretched huts, damp, half open, and too low for a man to stand upright in, prepared for them to inhabit. These cabins had, let it be borne in mind, cost the Government enormous sums of money. The Jews begged to

* Archives of Kherson—Bessarabian Board of Administration. Report of Feb. 15, 1849. No. 116.

be allowed to reconstruct these shanties; permission was refused by the officials. Stempel, the superintendent, then suggested that the Jews should be allowed to find shelter in neighbouring villages until spring. This also was refused, and they were peremptorily ordered to occupy the houses assigned to them. Those who had already sought refuge in the villages round about were driven back by Cossacks under circumstances of the greatest barbarism. Epidemics of scurvy and small-pox broke out shortly after.

It is only by the study of records like these, and of the laws forbidding Jews to own, lease, or till land save in such "colonies," that we can understand why the Russian Jew seems to have no vocation for agriculture. It would be a highly miraculous thing if he had.

All this helps us, too, to comprehend the remarkable solidarity, at once so pathetic and so prejudicial, into which the Russian Jews have been driven. Once you cross the Russian frontier, you can tell the Jews at railway stations or on the street almost as easily as in America you can distinguish the negroes. This is more a matter of dress—of hair and beard and cap and caftan—than of physiognomy. But even more still is it a matter of demeanour. They seem never for an instant to lose the consciousness that they are a race apart. It is in their walk, in their sidelong glance, in the carriage of their sloping shoulders, in the curious gesture with the uplifted palm.

Nicholas undoubtedly secured in one way or another the baptism of many thousands of Hebrews. But he solidified the others into a dense, hard-baked, and endlessly resistant mass, the like of which no other country, perhaps, has ever found taxing its digestive powers. It is interesting to note that by that very ukase of 1827, extending conscription to the Jews, the Iron Czar unwittingly contributed to this undesirable end.

In a previous chapter it was mentioned that the Empress Catherine II allowed the Jews who came under her rule by the spoliation of Poland to retain, alone among all their ancient Polish privileges, their institution of the consistory, simply because it provided a simple and satisfactory machinery for the collection of taxes. Nicholas in the same way turned this remnant of Jewish self-government to account by making the *kahals*, or consistories, responsible for the furnishing of quotas of Jewish recruits. This placed a tremendous weapon in the hands of the Elders and orthodox leaders in every Jewish community. The old people of the strict Talmudic sect had it in their power to deliver over to the bondage of the army, at their own discretion and at any time, any young Jew who offended them, or whose opinions they regarded as dangerous because heterodox. No more effectual means could have been devised for stamping out every vestige of independent thought or impulse. The theocratic heads of each little Jewish community became absolute in their authority. One

might almost say that they had the power over life and death in their hands. Naturally they used it to enforce observance of the minutiæ of the law, to widen the gulf between them and the Christians round about, and to augment the melancholy isolation of their race.

The abolition of these consistories in 1844, by which the Hebrew population was made subject to the ordinary civil jurisdiction, might have done some good if it had been a complete measure. But the duties of collecting taxes and of making up recruiting lists were still left to special Jewish bodies. Thus the real root of the evil was not touched.

Of course, there are those who will not regard it as an evil at all. I am not insensible to the picturesque and inspiring side of the picture—the spectacle of this little persecuted people clinging doggedly to the smallest detail of their despised faith, and risking everything they have in the world for the sake of perpetuating in its least important particular the ceremonial of their ancient worship. But in sober fact this view of the case is most apparent to those who know least of the Russian Jew. This theologico-racial isolation of his, much as it may appeal to the generous imagination, has done him only harm. It has not made him broad or tolerant; it has helped neither his mind nor his body. Its effect, on the contrary, has been to develop unlovely and unlikeable qualities in him. It has made him selfish, fanatical,

narrow-minded, ignorant of what civilisation likes and respects—in a word, unsympathetic. It is, more than anything else, responsible to-day for the fact that no nation on earth desires him as an immigrant; that in every city to which he comes he finds committees of his co-religionists formed for the purpose of sending him somewhere else.

Even his virtues are of the unsympathetic sort. He is a temperate man, generally a teetotaler; he is a creature of tireless industry, undergoing the most arduous tasks for the smallest rewards; he is, perhaps with the exception of the Irish Catholic peasant, the only uniformly chaste man in Europe; he is a faithful husband and a marvellously good father, taking the harshest forms of self-denial as a matter of course in the effort to provide education and a start in life for his children; he is innately a peaceful man, and, in whatever country he may be, a docile and law-abiding citizen.

Let us take this rather unique catalogue of virtues and use it to illustrate a contrast with the London dock labourer, with whom all England and the world at large sympathised in his great strike three years ago. This person, if he drinks at all, is about the drunkenest man on the habitable globe; his indolence is a thing which no employer can describe in language fit for publication; his haunts and the unspeakable streets about them swarm with drunken and vicious women, young and old; he almost rivals the miner of the north country as an habitual wife-

beater; his neglect of his children is at once the scandal and the gravest problem of East London; fisticuffs, street brawls, and the breaking up of political meetings are his unfailing delight.

Yet we all took the deepest interest in seeing the dock labourer succeed in his strike for what we felt in our bones would probably turn out to be only extra beer-money, and no new country would object to him as an immigrant. *Per contra*, the miseries of the Russian Jew had to mount up in the scale until they suggested the horrors of the Spanish Inquisition before the world really took much interest, and, as I have said, nobody wants him as a settler.

Of course one might explain this by quoting the sage old remark that, after all, there is a good deal of human nature in the average man. But there is something more in it than that. The Russian Jew has suffered from the internal effects of this huge legal compression we have been tracing. He has been driven into the most contracted conceptions of things—into the least expansive and least informed variation of an exclusive creed, and into a fierce struggle for existence outside the bounds of natural and legitimate industry. The notions of tolerance for others or indulgence to himself are equally unknown to him. He alone among the scions of his race in Europe has produced next to nothing in art, music, or letters. When we have named the two brothers Rubenstein, the sculptor Anto-

kolsky, and the young poet Frug, the list is well-nigh exhausted. If it were not for these, and for a certain journalistic activity among the more modern Jewish graduates of the universities, one might call the Russian Jew a barren and sterile thing in the gallery of nationalities.

He would, indeed, be a hopeless problem upon our hands were it not for the strange, almost startling, recuperative power in his race. The grandsons of these bearded and caftaned refugees, now flying in dumb and ignorant despair out into the unknown Christian world, will be recognisable cousins of Heine and Mendelssohn, of Spinoza and Eduard Lasker.

But to return to the chronicle. Nicholas is figured to our mind always as the very type of Sovereign who would not learn anything. In the matter of the Jews the latter years of his reign show a considerable change of attitude. After 1845 we do not meet many of those arbitrary and wanton ukases, curtailing Jewish privileges or driving the Hebrew population from certain towns, which are up to that date so cruelly abundant. These expulsions from towns were generally based upon the petition of the Christian merchants. Among the edicts ordering them are many curiosities. The Christian guilds of Knyshin, for example, in 1845 procured the expulsion of Jews from their town; in 1858 we find them admitting that this had done injury to the place and begging that the order be revoked. Even queerer is the

record of how, in 1829, the Karaïm Jews of Trok, in the Government of Wilna, obtained a decree expelling the other Jews from the town.

We see that the basis alike of antagonism and concession was economic. It was, in fact, a sort of barbaric variety of the protection idea. Every man who thought he could make more money if he were relieved of Jewish competition was an advocate of expulsions and a policy of repression. Where the Government here and there enlarged Jewish privileges it was admittedly because it had come to be seen that the country would profit by it.

As railways began to be built in Russia, and commerce and manufactures took on a new meaning and importance, the value of the Jew became more apparent. It is this fact which makes the closing part of the reign of Nicholas seem tolerant by comparison. A good many of the earlier restrictions were lifted. Jewish contractors were allowed to make bids for the carrying of Government stores and even the building of roads and railways. The farming of brandy manufacture came to be almost wholly in their hands, and now even the inspectorships over this business were filled with Hebrews, for the reason that they were superior in both honesty and bookkeeping skill to native Russians.

Nicholas, also, in his later years, exhibited a great liking for educated and intellectual Jews. Hebrew doctors, dentists, and lawyers were in

demand. To this Czar is due the exception made in Russian laws in favour of Jews who have graduated at the higher schools of the empire, by which they are allowed liberty of residence throughout the realm. The facilities which he finally offered to the Jews in the matter of education were not, however, very generally improved during his reign. They remembered his earlier devices of abducting and forcibly baptising their boys, and suspected some new scheme of conversion or perversion in this opening of the schools.

With the death of Nicholas and the advent of Alexander II a new era dawned. Dr. Mackenzie Wallace has drawn a spirited and comprehensive picture of the literal stampede all Russia made to reform everything. History records no more interesting phenomenon than this frenzy with which the whole Slavonic mass set to work ripping up old institutions, knocking over old idols, and beginning life afresh We have to do, however, with only one minor aspect of this universal but delusive awakening.

Almost the first thing the young Czar did was to revive a commission to inquire into the condition of the Jews, which Nicholas had decreed in 1840 and then allowed to lapse. This commission sent out a list of inquiries to all the Provincial Governors. These gentlemen returned voluminous reports, all, without exception, favourable to the Jews. Of course it must be remembered, in this as in everything else, that Russian officials report to the

Czar what they suppose the Czar wants to hear. The air was surcharged with Radical electricity. Everybody knew that the heir apparent had been in opposition and was still a Liberal. Rumours of the emancipation of the serfs already sounded in men's ears. Nothing seemed more natural than that he should be a friend of the Jews, since he was so unlike his father. Hence these reports sent in by the Provincial Governors are not to be taken as quite trustworthy testimony. Yet they are of value as showing how much interested officials could find to praise in the Russian Jew, once they felt the Imperial tastes ran that way. Indeed, for the ensuing fifteen years the official literature of Russia was to abound in testimonials to the industrial, commercial, and educational value of the Jew, emanating from the most authoritative sources.

Upon the strength of these reports were issued the ukases of 1859, 1861, and 1865, already referred to, by which Jews of the first mercantile guild and Jewish artisans were allowed to reside all over the Empire.

It is just as well to remember that even these beneficent concessions, which seem by contrast with what had gone before to mark such a vast forward step in Russo-Jewish history, were confessedly dictated by utilitarian considerations. The shackles were stricken only from the two categories of Jews whose freedom would bring profit to Russia. I venture to call attention to

this at the risk of seeming ungracious to the memory of the "Liberator Czar," because otherwise one gets a false perspective in the picture. There has never been any time when the Jews in Russia were treated like other people. Even in this period which we have now reached—this "golden age," as they call it now in bitter retrospect of regret—the milch-cow theory ruled their fortunes. They were treated better than before only because more enlightened views as to their usefulness prevailed. Those Hebrews who seemed unlikely to be of public use were kept, as before, cooped up in the Pale or running the gauntlet of police persecution.

The official records of this period are filled with recommendations from local officials pointing out places in the interior where skilled labour was needed and where Jewish artisans and artificers would be of service. Many of these are accompanied by the specious argument that if the Jews are allowed thus to settle in the interior, a few in each town, they will the more easily become converted and amalgamated with the Christian population. Ministerial decrees over and over again explain themselves on these practical, not to say sordid, grounds. In 1867, for example, Jews were for the first time allowed to rent flour mills and factories on rural estates, because "no one but Jews can be found there to manage these mills and factories, such management requiring special technical knowledge and experience." Nowhere

is it ever suggested that the burdens resting on the Hebrews are lightened because it is the civilised and human thing to do.

Still, the quarter century following Alexander II's accession in 1885 fairly deserves its appellation of the "golden age" when what preceded it is recalled. It seems almost beatific by comparison with what has followed it.

CHAPTER VI

"THE GOLDEN AGE"

WHAT is called the "golden age" of the Jews in Russia may be roughly said to have lasted for twenty years—from 1857 to 1877. It began with the efforts of a high-spirited, broad-minded, and eager young Czar to profit by the terrible lesson Russia had learned in the Crimean war, and to so widen and reform the national structure that no such catastrophe could ever again overwhelm monarch, army, and people alike. It ended in the dismal confession of a dispirited and pessimistic old Czar, who found himself against his will embarked in another only less disastrous war, forced gloomily to recognise that his efforts had been in vain, and that it was beyond the power of any human force to civilise and satisfactorily govern Russia.

It is the universal testimony of fair men in Russia that, all circumstances considered, the Jews bore very well the measure of prosperity now meted out to them. I have talked with numbers of Russian gentlemen who are frankly anti-Semitic, but who admit that fifteen years ago they were satisfied with the progress the Jew had made

ALEXANDER II

(*The Liberator Czar*)

under the existing liberal conditions, and regarded him as a good and valuable citizen. So late, indeed, as 1880 the Christian merchants of Moscow signed what we would call a round-robin setting forth the excellent qualities of their Jewish associates on the Bourse or in the mart, and of the Jewish artisans settled in the city, and protesting against the introduction in Russia of the odious *Judenhetze* then rampant in parts of Germany. The first man to sign this was M. Alexeieff, now the bitterly anti-Semitic Mayor of Moscow!

During these twenty years of relative enfranchisement the Jews came a long way out of their shell. The cruel line of race and creed demarcation which we have seen so deeply drawn in previous reigns became less prominent in men's thoughts—in places faded away altogether.

In nothing was this beneficent effect more plainly exhibited than in the matter of education. I have pointed out that, although Nicholas nominally freed the public schools to Hebrew children, the old suspicion of his motives prevented any general advantage being taken of this step. But this not unnatural hesitation vanished at once under the new reign. The Jews have in every land and in every age been distinguished for the prominence they give to the education of the young. In Russia they had the added incentive of securing the special privileges for their sons which still attach to the Jew "of the higher education." Every father who now could, by

doubling his own labour and self-denial, send his son to school, did so. In the cases of bright and promising Jewish boys whose parents were too poor, it was a common thing for the neighbours of the village or quarter to raise a purse among themselves to send them to school.

As the native Russian has less of this innate regard for learning than any other white man alive, it follows that the proportion of Jewish scholars in the schools far exceeded that borne by the Jewish to the general population. It was almost equally a matter of course that these Hebrew students should carry off the great bulk of the prizes. They started with a swifter and more facile brain; they had the advantage of a home training in another language, or perhaps two other tongues,* besides Russian, and they were sustained and spurred on by the peculiar significance of that goal toward which all struggled—the freedom of "the higher education." So it was not unusual to see in a school where only one-sixth were Jews every one of the prizes taken by this minority.

Many of these Jewish graduates of the *gymnasia* and universities entered the professions as physi-

* The importance of this it is impossible to exaggerate. The poorest and lowliest Russian, Polish, Bohemian or Hungarian Jew, through his Jiddish, knows enough of German to transact business in it. This gives him an enormous advantage, with strangers, over his neighbours who speak only the outlandish language of the country. But of course it also makes him all the more hated by those neighbours.

cians, lawyers, and engineers. Others embarked in commerce, happy in their exemption as belonging to the "higher education," until they could win the other title to emancipation as "Merchants of the First Guild"

The constitution of this privileged commercial class is a curious one. A Jewish merchant inside the Pale who has annually paid taxes amounting to 1000 roubles (something over $600) for five consecutive years may then go and establish himself provisionally in a city of the interior. Here for a further term of ten years he must pay this same amount of taxes. Then his term of probation is over, and he may thereafter live wherever in Russia he pleases, and even buy land, subject to certain testamentary restrictions.

Neither of these two classes, the *intelligensia* nor the Merchants of the First Guild, ever, however, became numerically important. Save in the three professions I have mentioned, the Jewish alumnus had very little chance of a livelihood in Russia outside of trade. He could not be a professor, he generally did not want to be a rabbi, and the civil service was practically closed to him. The result is that after a few years he either drifted into business or emigrated. As for the other class, it seems unlikely that there ever were at any one time more than 2000 or 2500 Jewish Merchants of the First Guild. The number in Moscow, for example, was estimated by well-informed people for me last summer at 120.

There are only two or three other cities in Russia where there could be more.

And these two classes, moreover, concern us the less in that they have scarcely been touched by the persecutions. No doubt their time is coming, but as yet they retain the privileges of 1865.

Of the "something less than 1,000,000" Hebrews supposed to have been living in Russia outside the Pale at the close of Alexander's II's reign, the overwhelming bulk were neither alumni and Merchants of the First Guild nor usurers; they were artisans and the families of artisans.

In the preceding chapter I have instanced some of the requests which came from all parts of Russia proper, after the Crimean war, for the colonisation of skilled labourers, and have shown that the shackles were stricken from the Jewish artificer inside the Pale primarily to meet this demand. Official records of the period make it clear that Alexander II himself desired to see the Hebrew population so completely distributed and scattered over the Empire that it would lend itself to amalgamation. His lieutenants never rose to this height of statesmanship. They, indeed, threw open the gates of the Ghetto and let 60,000 or 70,000 Jewish craftsmen out; but they followed these to the remotest parts of Russia, with the whole lumbering mass of machinery which had made their previous existence a burden.

Wherever they settled these artisans could not

buy property or take up a permanent residence. Everywhere they were "sojourners," members of a class known in Russian law as the *Inorodzy*, the other members of which are "the Kirghiz Tartars, the Samoyedes, the Kalmuks, the tribes on the Caspian, the nomads of the Stavropol Government, and the inhabitants of the Komando Islands." This Jewish artisan, settling, let us say, in Tula, had each year to get his certificate of good character from the police of that place, and his residential passport from the Jewish community of his original place of domicile, renewed. If from whim or by accident the renewal of either was delayed for a day beyond the stated time, the fact transformed him and his family on the instant into pariahs, wholly outside the law and helplessly liable to whatever measure of persecution and spoliation the police might choose to inflict.

Beyond all this he was entirely subject to the will of the artisan guild in this new town. Before he could take up his abode there at all, he had to pass a practical examination in the working of his particular trade. This was always a fruitful source of injustice and iniquity. The examiners would habitually find out what branch of shoemaking or watchmaking he knew best, and then set him to show his proficiency on another branch. This trick had its uses in more ways than one. It enabled the Christian craftsmen of each little town to regulate the number and skill in workmanship of their Jewish competitors; it allowed them to

pass in as artisans other Jews who really had no trade at all but would pay for an artisan's certificate, and it afforded a broad and fertile field for the cultivation of blackmail, which the Christian guild and the police tilled industriously on shares.

Although we are studying a "golden age," there were still other restrictions which might as well be set down here. The law of 1865 permitted the Jewish artisan emigrating from the Pale to take with him his wife, children, and infant brothers and sisters. These, as his family, shared such precarious right of domicile as he was able, by the means enumerated above, to secure. But if he died, back these others all had to go into the Pale again. Similarly, if he fell ill or was disabled and hence was no longer able to work at his trade, he must return to the village in the Pale whence he came, and where he had been unable to earn a decent living even when in health.

It will be seen that the gilding does not bear overmuch examination. On the other hand, it ought to be explained that while these harsh restrictions and many others remained on the statute books, they were by no means sternly or strictly enforced. The police used them just enough to extract a comfortable livelihood.

But there was still another class of Jews who, under the liberating edicts of 1857–65, left the Pale to spread through the towns of Russia proper. The merchant of the First Guild might

"take with himself" as many Jewish clerks as he "needed." I have put within quotation marks two portions of the sentence, because upon their phraseology has turned, as will be seen later, the ruthless expulsion of thousands of people. But in the days of Alexander II a loose and amiable construction was placed upon this concession, with results not wholly fortunate.

Considerable numbers of Hebrew clerks, book-keepers, accountants, and superior salesmen were brought into the interior, under the obvious meaning of this permissive clause. But there were also large numbers of less useful Jews who were neither artisans nor clerks, and who had no legal right to leave the Pale at all, but who followed on after the others. The recent opening of Oklahoma furnishes a rude sort of parallel for this overflowing of Israel from the Pale. Lots of people joined the throng who had no business to be in it—that is, who were without money, a craft, or a legal status—and greatly added to the complications and difficulties of the others.

These outsiders, if I may use the term, may have lacked trades and passports, but they had enough tenacity and assurance to make good the deficiency. They became small traders, hawkers, hucksters, messengers, money-changers, petty speculators, and the like; running a desperate race always, and being incessantly chivied by the police, like fakirs at a country fair, yet somehow scraping a living together. Soon their audacity

and the appetite of the police joined forces and devised a scheme from which mutual profit could be extracted. It is universally alleged on the anti-Semitic side, and as stoutly denied on the other, that these outsiders got themselves fraudulently registered as clerks of the Merchants of the First Guild, and that in payment for this privilege they rendered themselves useful to their pseudo employers—the connection helping them to make money with which to buy police immunity. The closest inquiry led to the conclusion that such a class did exist, but in nothing like the numbers popularly given in Russia.

It is almost entirely from this grade of unauthorized Jews, so to speak, that the usurers, brothel keepers, and general rich scoundrels about whom the Russians talk so glibly, have arisen. They owed every step of their progress, as now they owe their freedom from persecution, wholly to the venality of the Russian police and officials.

The commercial and industrial value to Russia of this change in the treatment of the Jews was immediately recognised. The Jewish traders and artisans who now spread themselves over the empire at once multiplied by tens or scores the traffic of the districts in which they settled, and altered the whole scale of prices in entire departments of manufacture. Elderly men remember still the wonderful effect produced in small places like Podolsk or Riazan by the advent of the Jewish watchmaker and silversmith, who would actually

repair timepieces to make them go instead of to secure their early collapse and another job—and whose charges bore an intelligible relation to the labour he had expended.

The great and almost universal cheapening of prices which followed this pacific dispersion of Israel, and which to this day is angrily remembered by the native Russian tradesman, is of service as pointing an essential difference between the two races.

The Russian tradesman dislikes exertion, and has almost a Turkish contempt for hurry or eagerness in traffic. He has no notion whatever of the theory of quick returns. His idea of commerce is to mark a fifty or sixty per cent. profit on his goods, and then sit down and drink tea and play draughts till God sends him a customer.

The Jew, on the other hand, comprehends to its utmost the value of turning his money as rapidly as possible, and he has a real delight in activity.* He will sell each week at a profit of 10 or 5 per cent. a stock of goods as big as that which cumbers the Russian's store for six months. If 5 per cent. is not forthcoming, he will take less, down to the lowest margin which will effect a sale and return something. Prince Demidoff says that he will even sell without a profit at all, if the demand

* The great Pan-Slavist, Aksakoff, says in his "Investigation of Trade at the Ukraine Fairs" (St. Petersburg, 1858), "while a rouble will be turned over twice by a Russian trader, in the hands of a Jew it will be turned over five times."

for that special line hangs fire, in order to hasten off and embark the capital in a more promising venture.

This conception of business did not endear the Jewish merchant to his Russian competitor. Still less did the amazing energy with which he threw himself into his work. The restless, nervous, tireless industry of the Russian Hebrew in pursuit of the object he has in view is in truth one of the chief objections to him. He sets a pace which the others find impossible.

In Kieff a very intelligent Russian took the trouble to explain to me why he objected to the Jews. There were a number of commonplace and familiar reasons, which did not stick in my memory. One, however, interested me. Formerly, he said, the peasants used to drive into town on market days and sell their produce in the open square. Then it was possible for honest citizens to sleep comfortably in their beds till 8 or after, and then stroll down at their leisure to the market, after their first breakfast. But now the Jews go out on the country roads for miles, at 4 or 5 in the morning, intercept these peasants and buy the produce as it lies in the carts. This my Russian friend regarded as monstrous.

As I have said, the development of trade, the opening up of new avenues of commerce, the founding of new industries, and the cheapening of articles of common use which followed this partial emancipation of the Jews, was of inestimable

service to Russia. It is impossible, however, to estimate it for what it was really worth, for the reason that it is, from every economic point of view, inextricably mixed up with the Emancipation of the Serfs.

The main bulk of the Hebrew host let out of the Pale by Alexander II found all Russia turned topsy-turvy by the sudden setting free of these millions of serfs. The opinion of the most thoughtful and best-informed men I know in Russia is that, without the services of these Jews as middlemen, as cheap producers, and as hard workers, the emancipation experiment would from the start have been a failure.

However that may be, it is the wildest and most fanciful nonsense to say that such measure of failure as is apparent now is due in any way to the Jews. Something like universal bankruptcy exists in Russia at the present day, undoubtedly. There is said to be not one Land Bank in the empire which, if it closed its affairs, would prove solvent. The Nobles' Bank is so sadly the other way that not even the lottery loan, which M. Vishnegradsky has authorised, against Russian law, and used his Ministerial power to compel other banks to take up, can possibly put it on its feet. But the Jews are not the creditors. The multiplying swarm of Grand Dukes, each with his two millions of roubles of capital; the rapacious gang of officials and politicians, of whom Ignatieff is a type; the vast thousand-armed devilfish of an

Orthodox Church, sucking in everything portable from every quarter, and piling up in its maw literally tons of gold and silver; the incapable native producers and traders, with their ceaseless clamour for higher tariffs; the wildly-debauched colonies of spendthrift aristocrats in Paris and on the Riviera —these are the people to whom Russia owes her bankruptcy—not the Jew.

Fortunately this assertion need not rest on my own authority. Very striking proof of its truth is at hand. Since the present famine became a reality in the minds of the governing officials in St. Petersburg, there has been an interesting relaxation in the vigilance of the Press Censorship. Presumably this means nothing more than that a general demoralisation has spread through the departments, as a result of the crisis. However that may be, it is certain that from last autumn to the present time the newspapers of Russia have printed much bolder remarks upon public affairs than ever before, and have apparently not been in any way molested. The three articles published in the St. Petersburg *Viedomosti* on the 11th, 15th and 25th of October, 1891, to the substance of which I desire to call attention, would six months earlier have brought the *gendarmerie* down upon the office within an hour of publication, and would probably have landed the editor in prison.

These articles were given the title of "Lie and Truth." They dealt with the familiar Russian assertion that the Jew "exploits" the moujik, and

is alike a social and commercial curse to Russia—and dealt with it, not by abstract arguments but by the production of solid and unanswerable statistical evidence.

Too much importance cannot be attached to this proof that the presence of Jews, so far from injuring the moujik, benefits him. His prosperity is much greater in the districts containing a large Jewish population than it is in parts where no Hebrew is allowed to live. Demonstration of this is furnished by the figures of the new Government Peasant Land Bank, whose operations extend over the 15 provinces of the Pale, and 26 other provinces of the interior. The Pale, as we have seen, is crowded with Jews; the Interior contains practically no Jews at all. The report of the Land Bank for the five years 1885–9, make this remarkable showing as to the condition of the Orthodox peasantry (the only persons permitted to buy land) in the two contrasted districts:

Land bought by peasants in the Pale .	67.2 per cent.
Land bought by peasants in the Interior .	32.8 „ „
Value of this land in the Pale . . .	87.7 per cent.
Value of this land in the Interior . . .	12.3 „ „

Of the total moujik population in these 41 provinces, the Pale contains considerably more than half, it is true, but the prosperity of this section as compared with the other is not to be accounted for in that way. If we follow the figures further, this is brought out very clearly:

Peasant population of Pale (15 provinces)	58.3 per cent.
Peasant population of Interior (26 provinces)	41.7 „ „

Area of peasant purchases in Pale .	470,299 desiatines.
By population ratio should be . .	407,463 „
Excess .	62,836 „

Value of land bought in the Pale .	23,496,795 roubles.
By population ratio should be . .	15,618,369 „
Excess .	7,878,426 „

There can be no answer to figures like these. They show us that in the dread Pale, where the unhappy Jews are huddled together in the most terrible poverty and driven to the most desperate devices to keep body and soul together, the Russian peasants have two million sterling more money to invest in land on their own account, than have the moujiks in the interior where no Jew is to be found. If this indicates "exploitation" anywhere, then obviously the Jew and not the moujik is its victim.

The Government report for the same years, 1885–9, on the amount of unpaid taxes due from the peasantry, is quite as remarkable. The Land Bank statistics covered only 26 of the interior provinces; these official tax-arrears returns embrace all Russia, but this only serves to exhibit the condition of the Orthodox peasantry of the Pale in a still more favourable light:

Unpaid taxes in Pale (15 provinces) .	36,041,590 roubles.
Unpaid taxes in Interior (35 provinces,	237,984,768 „

Debt *per capita* inside Pale . . .	26 kopecks.
Debt *per capita* outside Pale . . .	83 „

Students of sociology attach great importance to statistics based upon the death rate. In a country like Russia, and among a people like the moujiks, the question of health and of life itself is most intimately connected with that of material prosperity. Tried by this test, then, we secure much the same results. The *Viedomosti* quotes only the returns for the three years 1884–6. They show that the death rate in the 35 interior provinces where there are no Jews was 35.6 per thousand, whereas inside the Pale it was only 29.8.

Fully as interesting, from another point of view, are the statistics relating to crime. Enough has been said about the Pale to indicate that there, if anywhere under the sun, the Jew might feel justified in setting all laws, human and divine, at defiance. Yet the records of these three sample provinces of the Pale show that even where the Jew is poorest, most ignorant, most oppressed, he still behaves himself better than his Russian neighbours:

Town population Province of Vilna.

Jews	66.3 per cent.	Jewish criminals	52.1.
All others	33.8 „ „	Other „	47.9.

Town population Province of Vitebsk.

Jews	60.2 per cent.	Jewish criminals	49.
All others	39.8 „ „	Other „	51.

Town population Province of Kovno.

Jews	80.4 per cent.	Jewish criminals	50.1.
All others	19.6 „ „	Other „	49.9.

To get the full significance of these figures, it must be kept in mind that a thousand actions which the Russian himself is entitled to perform are crimes when done by a Russian Jew. Even praying in an unauthorised synagogue puts a man in the criminal classes—certainly would enrol him in one of the tables of Jewish offenders quoted above. There are no Jewish judges, no Jewish juries, no Jewish policemen. To say the least, we may be sure that the statistics do not err on the side of leniency to the Jew.

The sober truth is, that nobody in Russia has dreamed of paying any debt to a Jewish trader or artisan these eighteen months. The sums due throughout the Empire to individual Hebrews who have been driven out of their homes, no kopeck of which they can ever hope to see, would in the aggregate mount up to many millions. Thus at every step last summer I encountered or heard of some respectable head of a family, who could have gone away in relative comfort if his outstanding credits had been available or negotiable, but who in reality needed charity to assist him and his household to the frontier. Yet it is they who are denounced as "exploiters" of the Russians!

But it is important not to forget that we are studying a "golden age."

Up to the reign of Alexander II, the rich Jew was practically unknown in Russia. The Hebrew

doctors and dentists in St. Petersburg were prosperous, and here and there throughout the empire some merchant more daring or more useful to the police than the others had managed to lift himself out of the slough of penury which engulfed his race. These were very few in number, however, and are now hardly remembered.

But in the new order of things after the Crimea there was room and scope for the millionaire Israelite. Apparently the fortunes of those who now climbed the ladder of finance and attracted the attention of all Russia were at the time much exaggerated. The load of blackmail which they had to carry was too heavy and too continuous in its pressure to make the amassing of really great wealth possible. But, undoubtedly, Warschoffsky, Horwitz, and the elder Poliakoff became rich and powerful capitalists. I mention these names because they belong to a little family group, the character and fortunes of which played an important part in the tragic sequel. Intermarriages among their children bound these three strong and self-made men together. It was the era of railway building, and they, by superior shrewdness and energy, secured the most important contracts all over the empire. To this day, when an accident happens on a Russian railroad from bad rails, defective roadbed, or rotten bridge, the Russian always ascribes it to the Jewish contractors.

It does not concern our inquiry to dwell upon the careers of these great business and building

magnates. Probably they were no better and no worse than the active, aggressive, strong-handed men who in every new and undeveloped country come to the front, carry through big constructive projects, and reap the rewards. The building of our own Pacific road produced just this type of men and much the same kind of questionable methods. The difference was that in the United States the Crédit Mobilier exposure and Congressional interference made every detail of the scandal public property. In Russia many Ministers and officials and even princes of the blood waxed wealthy side by side with the railway contractors, but there was never a protest raised by anybody.

Smaller Jewish contractors grew up under the shadow of these great men, and thrived by intimate relations with the officials. The collusion was notorious. I have already spoken of Ignatieff, and the manner in which he shared with the Vannitsa Jew, Michaelowitz, the plunder of the Kotchubey estates. He was hand in glove with all these Hebrew contractors, who, by Ministerial favour and even higher influences, gradually got control of the public works. What was true of him was true of practically every other Russian politician and office-holder of importance. We have seen how, in the days of Catherine, Paul, and Nicholas, the poor Jews were treated by the Government as a kind of milch cow. The same idea was still in force, only it was the officials who had learned now to create and then exploit rich

Jews for their own personal benefit, at the expense of the country at large.

These things came to a climax in the Russo-Turkish war of 1877–8. Here again a dozen volumes could be written upon what must be condensed into a few paragraphs.

Briefly, that war was a veritable debauch of corruption. Its very inception was a cold-blooded swindle. Ignatieff, as Minister to Constantinople, sedulously sent home lying reports about Turkey's weakness, the disorganisation of her army and finances, and her utter inability to defend herself at any point. He as untiringly used every means in his power to stir up the Balkans to a point where Russian interference should seem to have become a matter of national honour and Imperial dignity. So enthusiastically was he backed by the whole official hierarchy—each member keenly scenting plunder in the air—that the Czar was at last reluctantly forced across the Rubicon. War was declared.

In Russia everything is done by contract—war included. What happened now simply staggers the imagination. Ten thousand civilian officials wrestled with ten other thousand army dignitaries for their share of the spoils. Minister struggled against General, Mayor hurled himself in fierce rivalry with Colonel. As a result, the army was so heartlessly and completely robbed by every one that it barely missed being starved out of existence; indeed, Russia would have been whipped to her

knees if thievery and bribe-taking had not been almost as prevalent among the Turkish Pashas as well.

In this wild rush for booty the luckless Jew was literally overwhelmed by superior Muscovite numbers. Like little Jakey, in the whimsical story of the synagogue being stampeded by a cry at the door of "job lots!" he was killed in the deadly crush.

The contracting machinery in Russia had been invented by the Jews and was in their hands. The three Hebrew capitalists I have mentioned, with numbers of their less powerful co-religionists, secured most of the contracts for supplies, horses, munitions, &c., at the outset. But the official appetite had all at once grown so savage and ravenous that they could not for a moment hold their own against it. They would themselves have been eaten had they not thrown everything else to the monster. Every Russian will tell you that the late Grand Duke Nicholas, brother to the Czar and Commander-in-Chief, stole enough for his own purse to have fed an army corps during the campaign, though he is said to have died last year heavily in debt. Thousands of officers only less splendid in rank took only a smaller share. The present Czar, then heir-apparent, was so indignant at this shameless wholesale robbery that he complained formally to his father, and an inquiry was ordered. The culprits were too lofty in rank to be exposed. The inquiry came to nothing.

Doubtless the Jewish contractors had embarked upon the business with confidence that at least a proportion of the spoils would be theirs. They made a cruel mistake. Not only were profits denied them—they did not get back even the principal of their investment. They were robbed openly and without mercy. Warschoffsky was broken mentally as well as financially by this spoliation, and hanged himself. The older Poliakoff, going to his funeral, fell dead with heart disease in the house of mourning.

In this sinister fashion ended the "golden age!"

CHAPTER VII

IGNATIEFF AND THE MAY LAWS

THE last thing which foreigners who study the contemporary history of a country get to understand is the part played in the making of that history by powerful journalists. No Englishman, for example, comprehends in the least the influence upon the American civil war exerted by editor-politicians like Horace Greeley and Thurlow Weed. In the same way, it is very difficult for any one outside of England to realise how largely the events of the past decade in these islands have been affected, mischievously for the most part, by Mr. William T. Stead.

A Russian newspaper man, of whom very few people in Russia itself, and practically none at all outside, have heard, enters our story at this point, and from the moment of his début becomes an important factor in its tragic development. I allude to Mr. Suvorin, the owner and editor of the *Novoe Vremya*.

A most characteristic anecdote is told of the manner in which he first became interested in the Jewish question. M. Suvorin was a journalist and popular writer of *feuilletons* for the most liberal

papers in that era of comparative Liberalism in Russia, that is to say, from 1865 to 1875. Then a distressing domestic tragedy broke down his working power, and forced him for a time into retirement. He had so far emerged from this, when the Russo-Turkish war came in 1877, as to have under his control an obscure and unremunerative paper. Excited by the rumours of great fortunes being made at the seat of war, he went down to Bucharest in company with an inventor, even poorer than himself, but who had some novel sort of copper kettle to sell. Suvorin conceived the plan of enriching himself by getting this kettle adopted for use in the camps of the Russian Army, and to effect this he sought an interview with Samuel Poliakoff, the great Jewish contractor, then in Bucharest. But Poliakoff, harassed and worried by incessant conflict with the bigger Russian robbers, perhaps already foreseeing the ruin which was to overtake him and his colleagues, was in no mood to trifle with this unknown and threadbare adventurer. He brusquely sent Suvorin about his business.

Suvorin returned to St. Petersburg with his kettles, and began attacking Poliakoff in his paper. His rage, however, was too great to appease itself upon any one man, even though that man were the millionaire Poliakoff. It spread itself out to embrace the Jews of Russia. At another time the police would have made short work with unauthorised journalism of this sort. But it chanced just

then to play into the hands of the most influential man in Russia—General Nicholas Paulovitch Ignatieff.

The Jews in Russia always mention this man's name under their breath and with a shudder of hatred. More often he is not mentioned by name at all, but designated with a word which means "The Infamous." I have been told by others that the Jews exaggerate Ignatieff's power for harm to them, and that he has by no means so fully earned their hatred as they imagine. Upon this, of course, I cannot pretend to pass. I know only that they universally ascribe to his malice, greed, and inhuman wickedness and cruelty the sum of their miseries, and that they trace the whole painful record of their persecutions and woes since 1877 by references to the details of his career.

I have shown in the preceding chapter the motives Ignatieff had for crippling and destroying the group of great Jewish contractors. Apparently cognate motives now led him to throw the protecting mantle of his power over Suvorin, and to give his support to the anti-Jewish crusade of the *Novoe Vremya*. From that moment the *Novoe Vremya* became an important paper. After the suppression of the *Golos*, in 1882, it took the position it has since held as the most influential journal in St. Petersburg, or in Russia. And Suvorin has grown now to be a rich man.

The rise of the *Judenhetze* in Prussia at this

particular time (1879) was of tremendous assistance to Ignatieff and Suvorin. It is the habit to assume that this agitation in North Germany was the beginning of the whole thing, and that the fever of persecution only spread over the border into Russia after it had become epidemic from Berlin to Pomerania. So admirable an authority as Dr. Wilhelm Müller takes this view.* But the facts are the other way. The *Novoe Vremya* had been attacking the Jews for months before the first outbreak of feeling in Germany, and Ignatieff, now become Governor of Nijni Novgorod, was openly against the Jews.

The German riots did, however, point the means to a practical demonstration of anti-Semitism in Russia. Up to this time, such unhappiness as the Jew in Russia had suffered had come from maladministration, from bad laws, rapacious and brutal officials, and the jealousy of Christian guilds of traders or artisans. He had got along well enough with the Russian people themselves. I do not pretend that he was beloved, but he had not been exposed to popular insult and violence. Indeed, as has been explained heretofore, he quite generally represented, in the minds of the Russian masses, cheap prices for goods and an industrious distribution of the necessaries of life. Therefore, no one had thought of beating him or burning down his house.

* The annual publication "Politische Geschichte der Gegenwart." By Wilhelm Müller, Professor in Tübingen.

But now, all at once, anti-Jewish riots began in Russia. It was interesting to note that they were all in Southern Russia, a section far remote from German influence. In each case they were in towns containing a large population of Greek stevedores and labourers, and these Greeks had a practical monopoly of the violence. This was in itself significant. But then it was discovered that a band of young men from St. Petersburg—young students, clerks, and ne'er-do-wells generally—was travelling about the country, and invariably appeared in a town a day or so before the outbreak of the riot. These *agents provocateur* did their work too clumsily. They grew inflated by their success, and appeared on the streets blowing whistles, marching in step, and otherwise calling attention to their organisation.

The scandal became so obvious that the Christian merchants of Moscow signed a protest against it. I have already mentioned the fact that M. Alexeieff, the present Jew-baiting Mayor of Moscow, headed the list of signatures. This protest, being intrusted to Dr. Bunge, a fair and honourable man, then Minister of Finance, was shown to the Czar in person, along with convincing proofs as to the bogus character of these riots. It is believed to have been due to direct Imperial interference that they thereupon came suddenly to a stop.

The Czar Alexander II, now in the sixties, saw his reign closing in disaster, confusion, and

dishonour. The hideous carnival of corruption which had paralysed his armies during the recent war, and so well-nigh brought them to defeat, disheartened him. Individually, here and there, as in the case of these fraudulent riots, he could intervene on the side of decency. But his utmost efforts could effect no more than might a cup of water dashed against a burning house. Small wonder, then, that he ceased to try.

Misgovernment, wholesale robbery, over-taxation, the failure of the emancipated moujiks to prosper under the double burden of their own ignorant indolence and the stupid greed of the landed classes—in a word, the blight of barbarism, had created widespread conspiracies of revolt. Society was honeycombed with murder clubs and anarchist associations. The Government of the "Liberator" Czar hardened into a despotism of the most malevolent type. In the years of 1879-80 not less than 60,000 Russian subjects were exiled to Siberia "by administrative order" without any trial whatever.*

It may be well believed that the Czar himself grew utterly despondent. He had tried to do such great things—with this squalid and evil result! Most of all—worst of all—he came to doubt the value of having striven to educate his people. The disaffection all came from the educated classes. To this day Russia offers the grotesque paradox of a country spending great

* Dr. Wilhelm Müller.

sums upon universities and higher schools, a large proportion of the graduates from which are sent in chains to Siberia shortly after their education has been completed. But in those fateful years practically every educated Russian was a suspect.

Naturally a state of affairs in which education is a ground for suspicion must have seriously affected the Jews. They were pre-eminently an educated class in Russia, for reasons which have been heretofore discussed. It is said that the Czar came to believe that the Nihilist movement drew its chief inspiration and instruments from the Jews. Obviously this belief would have been fostered by all the officials of the Ignatieff stamp who surrounded him, and it was openly promulgated in the *Novoe Vremya.*

There seems to have been extremely slight ground for this belief. Mloditzki, who attempted the life of Gen. Melikoff, was a baptized Jew, that is, a Hebrew who had formally accepted Christianity. One of the heroines of the conspiracy which finally accomplished its purpose was Jessy Helfmann,* the daughter of Jewish parents, but herself a professed freethinker. Aaron Zundelevic, the brave founder of the "secret press" in St. Petersburg, who learned the compositor's trade and taught it to four companions for this sole purpose, was the son of a little Jewish shopkeeper in Wilna.† This almost exhausts the list.

* "Underground Russia." By Stepniak. Page 112. London: 1883.
† Ibid., page 202.

In fact, the Jew does not lend himself to the notion of conspiracy. In every country he has been the patient, long-suffering, even servile non-resistant, never the rebel. All over Russia I was struck by the absence of political feeling in the talk of representative Hebrews. I never met one in whose presence I could feel, "Here is a man who would give money to the Nihilists." Of course this proves nothing. In Russia more than anywhere else the desperate man keeps anxious guard over his speech, his face, his demeanour. But the three Nihilists of Jewish blood whom I have mentioned were revolutionists because they were Russians; no hint is given anywhere that they took up arms to avenge the sufferings of their Hebrew brethren. No suggestion is ever heard of even the possibility of conspiracy or revolt among the Jews on account of Jewish wrongs. Their fault is to be over-docile and too submissively loyal.

All the same, Nihilism gave the Jews a bad name. When the terrible blow of March 13, 1881, was struck, an insidious whisper about a Jewish murder plot crept all over Russia in the wake of the dreadful first news. Within six weeks the Jewish quarter of Elizabethgrad was sacked and burned, and the reign of terror inaugurated which was to destroy thousands of homes, reduce 100,000 Jews to poverty, and stain the history of the century with incredible records of rapine and savagery.

The temptation to linger upon the tragedy of the Czar's assassination, concerning which such strange and sinister stories are afloat in Russia, is very great. And though it is only in its effects that it belongs within the proper scope of our inquiry, a brief glance at some of the surrounding circumstances will be of use.

It is well known, of course, that General Gourko, General Drenteln, and other police and palace officials knew all about the plot to blow up the Winter Palace for months before the explosion came. That was clearly demonstrated in the investigation. It was proved that detailed information as to the conspiracy and its purposes and methods had been put into their hands in November of 1879. The explosion, which killed and maimed so many of the Finnish guard and the servants, and which only missed destroying the whole Imperial family by the accident of dinner being kept waiting for a tardy guest, came in February of 1880.

The discovery that the very men who were ruling Russia with Oriental ferocity, in the name of "law and order," were capable of this mysterious negligence, or criminal connivance—one hardly knows to this day what to call it—impelled the Czar to energetic action. He abolished the office of Governor General of St. Petersburg, which Gourko had held, and installed Gen. Loris Melikoff as a kind of military dictator. Drenteln, the Chief of Police; Count Tolstoï, the Minister of Education, and other representatives

of the venal and stupid despotism which had grown up since the war, were thrown out of office, and men of a different type, or at least governed by a different spirit, took their places.

There was a year of Melikoff's Government. To the foreign student, who looks back now over the reforms actually put into operation, to say nothing of those proposed and believed to have been contemplated, the period seems one of unique good feeling, and of unparalleled efforts to abate the evils of which Russians justly complained. Those who lived through this time in Russia do not think so highly of it. They say that no doubt the intentions in high quarters were excellent. But the 30,000 officials charged with interpreting these intentions throughout the Empire simply ignored them and went on in the same old brutal and arbitrary rut. General Ignatieff was Governor at Nijni Novgorod. There were thirty other Governors like him in as many other *gubernia*. They did practically as they pleased, and what pleased them most was to neutralise everything which the hated Armenian, Loris Melikoff, essayed to do.

There came rumours at last that the Czar, under Melikoff's inspiration, was about to grant a Constitution. What purports to be a copy of this proposed instrument has since been published. Whether it is authentic or not, there is no doubt that a circumstantial statement as to the Czar's intention to issue some such decree had spread

throughout the higher official circles. It was even declared that the new Constitution had been signed and was to be promulgated on March 14, 1881.

On March 13 the Czar was blown to pieces by dynamite bombs.

The most that is charged in conversation in Russia is that the officials responsible for the safety of the Czar knew all about the fatal conspiracy, just as a year before they had been cognizant of the Winter Palace plot; that they could have prevented the tragedy by continuing the simplest of precautions, and that, from the point of view of the mutinous and disaffected aristocrats and bureaucrats, they chose a strangely opportune day for the relaxation of these precautions. This much can be said fairly enough, because there was a public, or semi-public, trial of some of these delinquent police officials. They were found guilty of negligence which had contributed to the death of the Czar, and were sentenced to *three years' residence in the pleasant northern town of Archangel!*

But back of what is said lies a world of terrible hints and suggestions. It is not for me to attempt to reduce them to language. They may, indeed, have no tangible basis in fact. But they have taken hold of men's minds in Russia, and they more than vaguely outline in the public consciousness a picture of perfidious murder more awful even than that of the Czar's mad grandfather, Paul.

Be that as it may, the enemies of Melikoff and of the murdered Czar's liberalising experiments came at once into power. It is true that Melikoff lingered along in his anomalous post of dictator for a brief period, and that the new Czar seemed for a little to be attracted by the notion of attempting still further reforms. But any expectations built upon this apparent hesitation were short-lived enough. Ignatieff had hastened to St. Petersburg at the news of the assassination, and was promptly made Minister of Domains. Two months thereafter he and his group had achieved a complete conquest. Melikoff had been driven out in disgrace and exile, and Ignatieff was in his place.

Many other names might be cited of men whom the old Czar distrusted or despised, and whom he had striven to deprive of influence in the State, who now mounted swiftly into prominence and power once more. Gen. Gourko, for example, whose dismissal we noted above, was made Governor General of Poland. Drenteln, who had shared with Gourko the odium of the Winter Palace explosion scandal, was given the fat berth of Governor General at Kieff. But the chief of the former suspects who now assumed control, and the one who gave character to the whole painful episode, was Ignatieff, the new Minister of the Interior.

Count Ignatieff was at this time in his fiftieth year. He had led a life of adventure and brilliant achievement in the far East, and in his younger

days, before he created a new order of reputation in diplomacy and politics, had enjoyed in Russia a celebrity not unlike that of the late Col. Burnaby in England. He was of noble birth, a millionaire, a scholarly gentleman of great linguistic attainments and delightful manners, and the husband of one of the ablest and most fascinating ladies in all Russia. He was a statesman of widespread, cosmopolitan acquaintances and connections. He had seen and studied most of the nations of the earth. Even his enemies admitted his high abilities. His industry and energy were beyond those of any other Russian in public life.

It might well be thought that such a man, stepping into the foremost post in the empire at the beginning of a new reign, would have before him a long, distinguished, and lofty career. As a matter of fact, he was brusquely, almost contemptuously, put out of office after a short thirteen months.

Ignatieff—long since christened "The Father of Lies"—has industriously circulated the story that he retired because the Czar failed to approve his project of reviving the ancient *Zemsty Sobory*, a kind of constituent assembly, or States General, which Peter the Great destroyed. This pleasant tale has come to be generally credited, and has even, in certain weak-minded quarters, cast a sort of halo of liberalism around Ignatieff's foxlike head. The truth is that Ignatieff would have as readily cut off his hand as committed himself to any abstract governmental scheme, of whatever

nature, which ran the slightest risk of encountering the Imperial disfavour.

It was not the *Zemsty Sobory* project which caused Ignatieff's downfall. He was disgraced because unanswerable proof was brought to the Czar that he was using the persecution of the Jews to extort blackmail, and that he had taken advantage of his position to exempt his own estates from the disastrous effects of the May Laws, while those of the Imperial family suffered.

The Jews themselves were never under any illusions as to the motives of their tormentors. The first great anti-Semite riot at Elizabethgrad, in April 1881, only preceded by a day or two Ignatieff's accession to office, and very shortly after came the terrible fires and looting at Kieff, where 2000 Jews had the roofs burned over their heads. It was clear enough that a definite purpose underlay these outbreaks and inspired the attacks in the *Novoe Vremya*. There could be but one explanation of Ignatieff's attitude.

If there had been any doubt, his circular rescript to the Provincial Governors in September 1881, must have cleared it away, In this he disclosed his whole line of campaign. "While energetically protecting the Jews from violence," he said, "the Government recognised the need of equally vigorous measures for removing the existing abnormal relations between the Jews and the native population and for protecting the people from that injurious activity of the Jews which was

the real cause of the agitation." In these, and in other not less menacing phrases with which Ignatieff prefaced his directions for the formation of local commissions to inquire into the subject, the Hebrews discerned the foundations for a colossal superstructure of blackmail.

While the "inquiry" went on, the riots increased in frequency and violence. The minor officials had caught their cue, and circulated the most shameless lies about the Nihilists being entirely composed of Jews, and about fresh Israelitish plots for the murder of the new Czar. They even winked at the distribution and placarding of a bogus ukase which purported to give imperial sanction to the spoliation of the Jews. Synagogues were burned and Jewish quarters sacked in dozens of southern towns; Sarah Bernhardt was publicly mobbed as a Jewess in Odessa; the Christmas-tide horror in Warsaw, where 900 houses and shops were broken into and pillaged and 10,000 people driven into the wintry streets, ran its cruel course without interference from the garrison of 20,000 troops, whose commandant, like Drenteln at Kieff, "would not trouble his soldiers for a pack of dogs of Jews."

All this had been done, bear in mind, without the issuance of any new adverse law or regulation. The legal status of the Jew remained precisely what it had been under Alexander II. The difference lay in the spirit which now, from Ignatieff down to the humblest *tchinovik*, ani-

mated the bureaucracy. Tens of thousands of Jews had fled across the frontier before the culminating tragedies of Warsaw and Balta. The flight then became an exodus.

Meanwhile rumour was busy with an expulsion edict which Ignatieff had ready for promulgation. An abstract of this edict was surreptitiously confided to the leading Jews of St. Petersburg, accompanied by the intimation that Ignatieff was still open to reasonable arguments upon the subject. Details of what followed have been given to me by men of weight and position, who took part in the conferences held. The Minister's "openness" of mind took tangible form in this proposition: For the sum of 1,000,000 roubles he would guarantee to except St. Petersburg from the provisions of the coming ukase. The principal Jews of St. Petersburg gave anxious consideration to this offer. They finally decided to decline it, upon grounds which were given to me in this order: First, the immense difficulty of raising such a sum of money: second, the danger of being found out: third, the impossibility of believing that Ignatieff would keep his word.

It is said that some few made private terms on their individual account with Ignatieff. The community as a whole refused to pay the bribe he demanded.

His answer was the "May laws." These temporary orders, as they were officially called, were confined in their operation to the Pale.

They comprised only three clauses, one compelling all Jews within the fifteen provinces henceforth to live in towns; one suspending all their mortgages and leases on landed estates, and also their powers of attorney for managing estates; and one forbidding them to carry on business on Sundays and the principal Christian holidays. These famous edicts bear the date of May 15, 1882.

The first emotion is one of surprise that these laws, which so profoundly stirred all Christendom, should contain only such limited and relatively inoffensive provisions. They involved hardships, no doubt, and measurably complicated the problem of existence which, as we have seen, had always pressed so cruelly for settlement within the crowded and poverty-stricken Pale. But, compared with the evil reputation they bear in the world's memory, they do not seem so dreadful after all.

The point is that these laws, which were all that Ignatieff dared venture ask the Czar's signature for, and which he issued as "temporary orders," because he feared their rejection if submitted to the Council of the Empire, bore only the smallest relation to the ferocious outburst of persecution associated with their name. They merely cast the shadow of imperial authority over the Ministerial *Judenhetze*.

The savage orgy of official violence which ensued was independent of all laws. No pretence

was made of confining it to the Pale. The creation of Melikoff's dictatorship, and, later, the reign of martial force following the assassination, had disorganised completely such traces of system and responsibility as had previously restrained the local officials. Every man in uniform had become a law to himself. The mere rumour of the "May laws" served to precipitate a headlong rush upon the unhappy Jews. We need not dwell upon the results; sufficient are the horrors of our own immediate day. It is enough to note that the excesses sent a wave of indignation surging all over the civilised world, which found vent in ringing protests and the prompt organisation of committees of succour and relief. The amazing statement is made now that between April of 1881 and June of 1882 not less than 225,000 Jewish families—comprising over a million souls and representing a loss to the Empire of £22,000,000—fled from Russia!*

The May laws had been issued but a month when there came a sudden and strangely unexpected deliverance. Ignatieff retired from office on June 12.

As I have said, he has industriously built up the fiction that his downfall was due to his desire to re-establish a mediæval variety of Parliamentary institutions in Russia. The lie is characteristic. He was turned out because convincing

* "The History of the Year"—October 1881 to October 1882. London: Cassell, Petter, Galpin & Co.

proof of his attempt to extort a million roubles from the Hebrew community of St. Petersburg was laid before the Czar. With this exposure of the shocking venality and beast-like battening on human misery which underlay the persecution, it came to an abrupt end.

An additional reason for Ignatieff's tumble was given me by a Russian official, whom I met in Bucharest, and who had been in 1882 in a position to know very well what was going on. According to this narrative, Ignatieff took the precaution, after the May laws had been drafted, but before the Czar had seen them, to send his venerable and infirm mother down to Kieff, near which all his great Southern estates lie, and have her on his behalf privily renew all the contracts with his Jewish farm-managers and tenants for another twelve years. It was only after his mother had telegraphed to him the fact of the contracts having been renewed, that he secured the Imperial signature to the May Laws and promulgated them. This was very clever—almost as clever perhaps, as that earlier performance of his at Constantinople, when as Russian Ambassador he combined with the Grand Vizier to officially deny the current and correct report that the interest on a certain Turkish loan was to be defaulted, to sell this and other Turkish securities "short" on a market thus fraudulently inflated, and, when the crash came, to each pocket profits said to have mounted into the millions—

but one important circumstance had been overlooked. The Czar's uncle, the late Grand Duke Nicholas, also owned large estates near Kieff. When the May laws were promulgated, Nicholas, who had been taken by surprise, hurried to forestall their action by seeking to renew the contracts with *his* Jewish managers and tenants. They told him that he was too late, and expressed their regret that he had not acted sooner, say when Count Ignatieff renewed all his contracts on his neighbouring properties. The Grand Duke, astounded at this, made inquiries, and carried the proofs of Ignatieff's perfidy straight to his nephew, the Czar.

It is stories like these which explain why the Jew's only name for the Russian is "*Afoinka ganev*," that is to say, "the thief." I give it as it was narrated with circumstantial detail to me, by a Russian who did not dislike Ignatieff, and who related the anecdote with evident pride in the ex-Minister's shrewdness. How much, if true, it had to do with Ignatieff's downfall I cannot pretend to say. But it is interesting, if only from the proof it affords that Jewish managers and tenants were valued by owners of big agricultural estates above their Slavonic neighbours. To this day, it is the fact that the subordinates who superintend and carry on the bulk of Ignatieff's widely extended property interests and affairs are Hebrews.

Ignatieff's successor, Count Dmitri Tolstoï, had

belonged to the reactionary party as Minister of Education, and could in no sense be regarded as a reformer. But, following Ignatieff, he was veritably Hyperion to a satyr. He recalled his predecessor's September circular, and, although the May laws were not revoked, all official demonstrations against the Jews were summarily stopped.

People said that at last the new Czar had asserted himself, and congratulated one another upon the beneficent promise which this involved to Russia and to civilisation. We pass now to a study of the manner of man this new Czar is, and of the unhappy means by which that promise of his early reign has been turned into Dead Sea fruit of curses and of crimes against humanity.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CZAR AND HIS COUNSELLORS

When the witty Abbé Galiani declared that Virtue was more dangerous than Vice, because its excesses were not open to the restraints of conscience, he might well have beheld, in prophetic vision, the present Czar of Russia.

Alexander III has now been more than eleven years on the throne; he held an independent command in a great war fifteen years ago; he has been a brother-in-law to the Prince of Wales for over a quarter of a century; yet to this day he is the least-known personage in Europe. It is not alone that foreigners have little information about him. His own subjects know even less. When they have told you that he is an extremely good and honourable man, personally; that he loves his wife very much, and finds his greatest enjoyment in being with her and the children, and that he is very strong and works hard, you discover that their impressions are exhausted.

There is something at once grotesque and pathetic in this Russian ignorance about the Czar. No anecdotes are told of him. No allusions are made to him in ordinary conversa-

tion. A hush falls upon any gathering, all over Russia, at the mere casual mention of his name. I have more than once seen this strange and sudden constraint manifest itself in a Russian family circle, where English was being spoken, and it was entirely certain that the servants could not understand a word of our talk, when I asked about the Czar. Their silence said plainly that this was a subject to be left alone. I know of no other country in the world where this weird awe at the very sound of a human being's name can be duplicated. On a miniature scale, emotions of this sort may have been created in bygone times in some lonely part of England, where a merciless and mysterious highwayman held every road under a nightmare of terror, and no one knew or dared guess who his confederates might be.

The Czar's plans are never published. The flag is kept flying on each of his palaces whether he is living there or not. The people of St. Petersburg rarely know whether he is in residence there or somewhere else. That is a question which no Russian asks of another. I was in the capital during the visit of the French fleet. The English newspaper correspondents had absolutely no means of learning from day to day what was going to happen. The officials gave them plenty of information, of course, but it was all false. The Czar never appeared at the times and places they indicated, but invariably did appear when the correspondents were chasing

wild geese in other directions. It is said that the officials were themselves as much in the dark as the rest. Once, while I was walking with one of these journalists across the open square in front of the Winter Palace, and we were in doubt whether to visit the Hermitage Gallery or take the boat for Cronstadt, I suggested that we ask a uniformed officer who had strolled out of the Palace if the Czar was to inspect the fleet that day or some other. My companion laughed aloud at the idea. "We should probably both be arrested—you certainly would be shadowed all over Russia," he said, in explanation.

The veil of mystery which envelops the Czar's intentions almost wholly masks his individuality. In addition to his great personal goodness, it is understood that he is a taciturn man, and it is apparent that he is growing very fat. Every Russian, moreover, is familiar with the fact that he wears a large full beard, a fact which is not without significance, by the way, for since Peter the Great established the cult of shaving this is the first male ruler of Russia who has shaved no part of his face. But there popular knowledge of Alexander III abruptly ends.

It was my fortune to get to know several people—nether Russians nor Jews—who see a good deal of the intimate side of imperial life, and who talked with a certain degree of freedom about its more important features. It was not much that they could tell, after all was said and

done, but it at least threw some light upon the baffling enigma with which the outside world has laboured since 1881. I offer it for nothing more than the candid talk of men who know the Czar, and are personally well affected towards him.

Alexander III is a man of rather limited mental endowments and acquirements, who does not easily see more than one thing at a time, and who gets to see that slowly. In other words, he is a born "potterer." He has no idea of system and no executive talent. He would not be selected to manage the affairs of a village if he were an ordinary citizen. It is the very irony of fate that he has been made responsible for the management of half a million villages.

He has an abiding sense of the sacredness of this responsibility, and he toils assiduously over the task as it is given him to comprehend it. Save for brief periods of holiday-making with his family, he works till two or three o'clock in the morning examining papers, reading suggestions, and signing papers. No man in the empire is busier than he.

The misery of it is that all this irksome labour is of no use whatever. So far as the real Government of Russia is concerned, he might as well be employed in wheeling bricks from one end of a yard to the other and then back again. Even when one tries to realise what "Russian Government" is like—with its vast bureaucracy essaying the stupendous task of maintaining an absolute personal supervision over every individual human

unit in a mass of a hundred millions, and that through the least capable and most uniformly corrupt agents to be found in the world—the mind cannot grasp the utter hopelessness of it all. The ablest man ever born of woman could do next to nothing with it—at least, until he had cleared the ground by slaying some scores of thousands of officials.

Alexander III simply struggles on at one little corner of the towering pyramid of routine business which his Ministers pile up before him. Compared with him Sisyphus was a gentleman of leisure.

This slow-minded, mercilessly-burdened man knows very little either of the events close about him or of the broader currents of contemporaneous history outside. He had the customary elaborate education from which most Princes mysteriously manage to extract so little benefit, and he seems to have got less of it than usual. He was a man grown before his elder brother's death pushed him forward as heir to the throne. A belated effort was then made to engraft upon his weak and spindling tree of knowledge some of the special fruits of learning which a future Emperor should possess. He was docile and good. Some of his teachers established a powerful personal influence over him, the effects of which were afterwards to be of such terrible moment, but they accomplished little else.

The old Czar, Alexander II, viewed his heir

with melancholy aversion and distrust. He was kept down as much as possible, and made to feel his father's unsympathetic attitude in many ways. Once or twice he was subjected to disciplinary measures, which have been described to me as not readily distinguishable from imprisonment. This is only another way of saying that, like most other heirs apparent, he became the focus of attraction for all the elements of disaffection in civil service and army alike. It does not appear that he ever assumed the leadership of these elements or had anything to do with their intrigues. The only instance of interference attributed to him is that already mentioned, when he appealed to the Czar to investigate the gross financial scandals thrust upon his notice at the seat of war. But the old Czar none the less regarded him as fully identified with the reactionary forces of the Empire, and was troubled with gloomy forebodings as to the character of his reign.

This natural dulness of mind and the enormous burden of routine work ceaselessly pressing upon it, go some way toward accounting for the one feature about the Czar which most puzzles outsiders —namely, that he doesn't seem to have any notion whatever of what is going on in his own country.

He reads two papers—the *Novoe Vremya*, which Suvorin learned how to make pleasing to his tastes and feelings, even before he became Emperor, and the *Grashdanin*, which is edited by a bright man of position for whom the Czar

has a great liking, Prince Mastchersky. To these personal relations is ascribed the peculiar licence allowed to the *Grashdanin;* one continually finds in it a freedom of expression which no other editor, not even Suvorin, would dare venture upon. While I was in St. Petersburg, for example, the *Grashdanin* quite frankly deprecated the craziness with which Russia was dancing about in its welcome to the French fleet. Similar utterances in another paper would have involved prompt conflict with the censor.

But the *Grashdanin* is no whit freer than the *Novoe Vremya* in the handling of what is called news. The newspapers of Paris, curious as they seem when judged by English or American news standards, are mines of information compared with the journals of St. Petersburg. They contain only the baldest and barest skeleton summary of the world's events, laying great stress upon births and deaths within the blue-blooded pale of royalty, and for the rest chiefly chronicling accidents, fires, and like non-contentious happenings. Such political writing as is permitted them is almost wholly confined to foreign politics, and is usually in controversial comment upon utterances quoted from the Berlin, Vienna, or London press. But these utterances must have been originally harmless, or they would have been blacked out by the foreign press censor before the Russian editors got them.

It is understood that the Empress receives and

reads the *Times*. The question is often raised whether she does not bring to her husband's attention the facts about Russian misgovernment which its St. Petersburg correspondent has for years so bravely published. It is said that on occasion she had done this, and that, moreover, upon the suggestion of her brother, the Crown Prince of Denmark, and the Prince and Princess of Wales, she has tried to put before him something of the amazed disgust with which Russian doings seem to have inspired Christendom. Many varying stories are told of these efforts to improve the annual Imperial holiday at Fredensborg, in Copenhagen Court circles. It is said, for example, that some one of the English royal party which was there last autumn to meet him nailed a copy of *Darkest Russia* on an inner door of his apartments, half-jokingly, half in earnest. In another quarter it is averred that the Czarina ventured last September to show him a letter she had received from her sister, the Princess of Wales, on the subject of the Jewish persecutions, and that the Czar, losing his temper, brought his hand down vigorously upon the table and commanded that the topic be not mentioned again in his presence.

But the poor little frightened and saddened lady, over whom hangs day and night the haunting horror of a violent death for those she loves, can have but small heart for this mission. The one consolation of her unhappy life is the tender affection in which the weary and puzzled big man,

her husband, holds her. Why should she vex and grieve this affection by repeating to him the malicious things which outsiders are saying about his work?

That they are malicious, I am assured that the Czar firmly believes. How should he learn otherwise? When these German or English accusations of cruelty, of injustice, of crime are brought under his notice, let us assume that he makes inquiries. To whom does he address these inquiries? Obviously to the officials. And quite as obviously these officials swear with solemnity and fine unanimity that the allegations are all monstrous falsehoods. A sharper, bolder, more energetic ruler might contrive to force his way behind this barricade of official assurances which surrounds the throne, and get once in a while at something like the truth. Alexander III does not even try to do this—and doubtless would fail if he did try.

Indeed, under the skilful manipulation of one of these officials, these attacks upon Russian honour and civilisation have had quite a different effect upon him from that contemplated. So far from awakening him to the truth, they have rendered him sullenly and obstinately enraged at their authors, and at the foreign communities which credit them.

The trait of family affection, which is developed in the Czar to almost a morbid state, colours his attitude toward Russia. He thinks of the

whole Russian people as his children; to his mind they are all under one roof—his roof. Above everything else, he will strive to protect the family reputation. If scandals arise, his chief desire is to hush them up, to prevent their being noised abroad. He will make an effort to see justice done, and to punish the offenders, but his foremost solicitude is that it may all be done quietly. Hence one from time to time witnesses in Russia the phenomenon of an apparently influential official being suddenly, without warning or trial, pulled down out of sight and secretly sequestered. He may never reappear again, and all that people will guess about the affair will be that in some way his misdeeds became known to "the little father."

This quality, upon which those who are informed about the Czar lay great stress, quite naturally prevents his taking kindly to foreign criticism. In truth, it makes him furious, and for that reason, again, he avoids reading or learning about it.

This picture of the Czar, based upon the talk of people who know him and like him, might easily be expanded in the direction of personal gossip, but that is not desirable here. In some respects these private hints run counter to generally accepted notions. For example, public belief holds firmly to the idea that the Czar is a very devout man, and that since the Borki accident he has been a religious monomaniac. I am assured that he takes his personal religion very easily indeed,

and has never expressed any concern in the ministrations of the palace chaplains save that they should make their sermons shorter. In the same way, he is popularly thought of as an ardent pan-Slavist, whereas my information is that he and the dominant Court circles, as distinguished from official circles, are against pan-Slavism.

These are notes of contradiction which tend, I frankly confess, to disturb the balance of the theory I brought away from Russia with me. They render certain current phenomena less easy of comprehension than they would have otherwise seemed. But they could not be suppressed with candour, and, after all, giving them their greatest weight, they but serve to show afresh what an inexplicable chaos of confusion and clashing cross-purposes the whole Russian question presents.

One further personal point, and we may leave the individuality of the Czar and take up once more the thread of events. Alexander III is called by sundry enthusiasts the Peacemaker of Europe. The informants to whom I have referred agree that, though he is by nature a kindly man, he is not at all swayed by humanitarian views, and has no more abstract hatred of war than has any other trained soldier. His objection to war is, however, very strong, and it is based entirely upon his dread of the physical discomfort to which a man of his increasing bulk would be subjected in the saddle. This sounds almost comical, but it is given to me for sober fact.

We have seen how this slow, commonplace, conscientious man wavered and trembled in hesitation when, in March of 1881, the murder of his father suddenly threw upon him the overwhelming weight of Czarship. Much has been told me of the brief period in which the new Czar, startled and shaken by the frightful tragedy, yet even more moved by dazed contemplation of the herculean task devolved upon him, dreamed of attempting to follow in his parent's footsteps, and keep the poor little plant of Liberalism alive. There is neither time nor space here in which to dwell upon this phase of the story.

It is enough to note once more that nothing came of this momentary first impulse. The reactionaries, Ignatieff at their head, swarmed back into place and power. It is true that after thirteen months, as has been related, Ignatieff's effort to blackmail the Jews of St. Petersburg was revealed to the Czar, and he was summarily thrown from office. His successor, Count Tolstoï, reversed the policy of the Government against the Jews. But in other respects there was little or no change. Officialism grew stronger year by year; cliques of Ministers and Governors gathered more and more fully into their hands the vast powers of the autocracy. Even when the Czar most actively bestirred himself he could not control the ten-thousandth part of the things they did in his name.

So far as the Imperial family exerts any influence

upon the head of their house, it is probably on the wrong side. Of the Czar's uncles, brothers to the late Alexander II, two have recently died—Constantine, who was a learned and liberal-minded man, and suspect on that account, and Nicholas, who was neither learned nor liberal, but had too evil an official and financial record to enjoy his nephew's respect or confidence. The remaining uncle, the Grand Duke Michael, is a scholarly and sensible Prince, who used to be able to do a certain amount of good in his post as President of the Council of the Empire, but who is now sixty years old and has grown tired of the thankless task of resisting that awful dead weight of the bureaucracy. The first-named of these three, Constantine, left a son bearing his own name, now an alert-faced, bright-eyed officer of thirty-four, who is considered to be intellectually the best of the Romanoffs. This Constantine Constantinovitch has written one or two books, and a poem at which the Czar is said to have lifted his eyebrows. He bears one of those vague and intangible reputations for Liberalism which grow so easily from a despotic soil, and is worth remembering, not for what he has done, but for what numerous Russians imagine he may do, if the affairs of their country drift still further downward to absolute chaos.

One of the Czar's four brothers stands out with prominence as a strong and powerful figure in imperial counsels. Of the other three Alexis is too easy-going and pleasure-loving to worry his hand-

some head about politics, Serge is a foolish man with nothing to say for himself, and Paul is too young to carry weight, even if he gave promise of capacity. But the Grand Duke Vladimir is a potential and genuine personality.

In many respects, Vladimir, who is only two years younger than the Czar, is the truest descendant of Nicholas that Russia has seen. He has more of the stalwart and somewhat sinister comeliness of his grandfather than any of the others. He inherits, too, a large share of that remarkable despot's great energy and personal force. Whatever he sets about doing gets done. He has a bitter kind of wit, which sometimes achieves the painfully rare feat of making the Czar laugh. His robust vigour and clear way of seeing and going straight to the point also commend him to his brother's confidence. How strong he is may be seen from the fact that his wife, a Mecklenburg Princess, and in resolution and marked individuality a fit mate for Vladimir, has been able to defy for eighteen years the tremendous pressure brought by Court and Church to bear upon all non-Orthodox wives of Grand Dukes to accept the Greek faith. If Vladimir chose to play a part for himself in Russia, he might work untold results. Although there are two lives between him and the succession, people have an uneasy feeling that somehow, some time, he will be Czar. But thus far his chosen *rôle* has been that of his brother's right-hand man. He is openly a reactionary—a frank

H.I.H. THE GRAND DUKE VLADIMIR

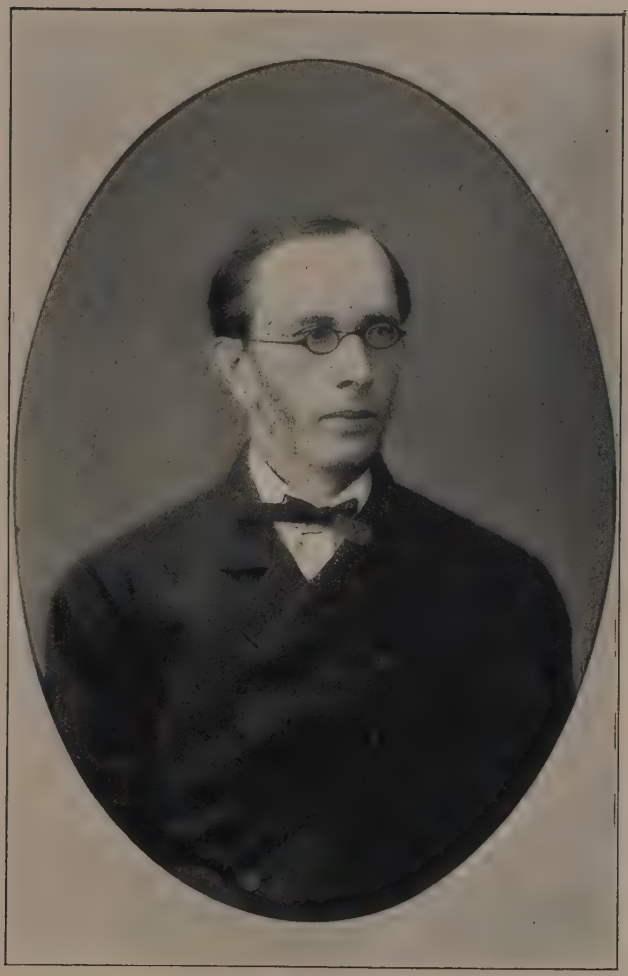
believer in autocracy, sustained if needful by gibbet and grape-shot. When, a little while ago, it was rumoured that he was to succeed General Gourko at Warsaw, the fact that Gourko is the most mercilessly savage governor any living Pole can remember, did not prevent a thrill of dismay running through Poland at the prospect of the change. To conclude, Vladimir is the man of whom Ministers and high officials stand in most dread.

There are very few of these bureaucrats dimly discernible in the thick shadows of Russian despotism whom we need trouble ourselves to distinguish, even by name. When Count Dmitri Tolstoï died, a less able and less scrupulous man, Dournovo, became Minister of the Interior. Some time before this, a minor official named Vishnegradsky had the fortune to write a report on Russian finance which attracted the Czar's attention—and won from him the curious declaration that it was the first document of the sort he had ever been able to understand. The lucky author was made Minister of Finance. There will be more to say of him in the sequel. The Czar from the outset has insisted upon personally directing at least the foreign policy of his Empire, and, accordingly, M. de Giers, a supple and observant courtier, remains in only nominal control at the post of Foreign Minister. The Czar's former military tutor, Vannoffsky, is Minister of War, and, with the Grand Duke Vladimir and Dournovo, is at the head of what is called the war party.

But more important than any of these, more important than the Czar himself, is the thin-faced, slender, spectacled man who since 1880 has been Procurator of the Holy Synod — M. Pobiedonostseff.

This remarkable personage fascinates the imagination. He is as unintelligible to the modern Western mind as Torquemada. Indeed, one must go back to mediæval times for every parallel which he and his work suggest. The whole situation created by him is like nothing else in history so much as that which Spain presented under Ferdinand and Isabella, where the influence of a man we cannot now at all comprehend persuaded a gentle, wise, and kindly Sovereign to stain her reign with the most hideous and stupid of crimes against humanity, and to gratuitously work the destruction of her country.

Pobiedonostseff is a learned lawyer who was one of the present Czar's tutors in his youth. His tastes led him, however, when the opportunities for preferment arose, to choose the ecclesiastical side of the autocracy in which to serve. That he is a sincerely and fanatically pious man, as the Greek Church understands piety, seems beyond doubt. During the great fast of the year he retires to the Sergieff Monastery and mortifies the flesh as vigorously as any anchorite, remaining for days on his knees, fasting and beating his forehead against the stone floor. This does not prevent his telling the most amazing and barefaced lies, as it



"THE GRAND INQUISITOR"
(*M. Pobiedonostseff, Procurator of the Holy Synod*)

did not prevent his coolly persuading the Czar to steal Maurice Hirsch's million roubles. His religious fervour contemplates without blinking the prospect of ten millions of Jews, Lutherans, Catholics, and dissenters generally being despoiled, evicted, harried by Cossacks and driven like criminals from their homes.

This theory of serving God with falsehood, with theft, with shameless treachery, with torture, massacre, and wholesale persecution, has in other times possessed the brains of great and good men of our own Western races. But these men have all been dead three or four hundred years. Russia and M. Pobiedonostseff have only just reached the point where Europe stood when Columbus discovered America.

Everything is nowadays ascribed to the ascendency which Pobiedonostseff exerts over the mind of the Czar. In one sense that is true. The Procurator of the Holy Synod had long-standing claims upon the affection and respect of the new Czar when the present reign began. He became a trusted adviser; then, little by little, the power behind the throne. He grew to guide the Czar in the selection of new Ministers and officials and in the distribution of honours and of rebukes until the whole official world of St. Petersburg dreaded him, and fawned upon him as Paris did in its time before the "Gray Cardinal." To-day the enormous power which he wields is exerted much more through these eager official sycophants, who

owe their places to him and scramble over one another in their haste to carry out his most faintly hinted desire, than through direct personal contact with the Czar.

It is indeed likely that he himself has been swept along much more rapidly, and to greater lengths than he had dreamed of, by the headlong zeal of these underlings. He set in motion the Governmental machinery for the repression of dissent, originally, because he was an active-minded man who took his duties seriously, and who saw that anything like spiritual revivals outside the Greek Church must be stopped if Orthodoxy was to survive. Once begun, this spirit of repression quickly ripened into a rage for persecution. From the exiling of M. Pashkoff in 1882, for the crime of holding Bible meetings among the fashionable people of St. Petersburg, to the expulsion of six millions of Jewish people, begun in 1890, is a tremendous step. But the one is the natural sequence of the other. The prosecution of the Pashkoffski was the match which set fire to the prairie.

From the hunting of this almost ridiculously small and unimportant quarry, the whole massed pack of Russian officials have excited themselves into a gigantic *wild-jagd* of heretics and unbelievers all over the Empire. Franzos tells of a Polish prince, Czartoryski, who went gunning among the Jews of his district of Podolia, "because there was so little game left in the

neighbourhood.* There is a good deal of this same barbarous lust for blood-letting sport in what we are witnessing now. A shot is being taken at everything that rises—Mennonites, Stundists, the Molokani, the Finns, the Catholic Poles, the Germans, the Jews alike. Only the Mohammedan subjects of the Czar's eastern empire are not molested, save here and there in isolated instances, and that not until recently. But for all other non-Orthodox game there is no close season.

Of this vast and terrible persecution the outside world knows but little. We can never hope to learn the thousandth part of the truth.

But it is possible to get approximately at the facts, so far as its Jewish victims are concerned. For many reasons they attract more attention and excite a greater interest throughout the world than do their companions in misery. Moreover, the previous existence of entire volumes of laws adverse to them has rendered it the easier for the police to harry, plunder, and expel them *en masse*. But in his study of the repellant details of the year of terror now drawing to a close, and in following the still more shocking events which the near future threatens, the reader must remember that the Jews are only one among many unhappy sects and classes whom Pobiedon-

* "The Jews of Barnow." Stories by Karl Emil Franzos. Edinburgh and London: 1882. One of the most striking and effective works of our generation.

ostseff is mercilessly driving to despair, ruin, and exile.

It has seemed important to dwell at length upon the peculiar conditions existing in Russia, and upon a historical examination of the dull incompetency, ignoble greed, semi-civilised vanity, and stark-mad fanaticism which, confusedly struggling together for evil, have produced this savage spectacle at which humanity now revolts. We have hereafter to consider nothing but the persecution itself.

CHAPTER IX

THE HOLY SYNOD AT WORK

THE ascending progress of the Procurator of the Holy Synod, M. Pobiedonostseff, in influence and authority, is marked at each successive stage by fresh impositions upon the Jews.

I have noted that when Count Dmitri Tolstoï succeeded Ignatieff, "the Infamous," in the midsummer of 1882, the persecution which had been begun under the May laws came to a halt. It is true that the laws themselves were not revoked, but it was everywhere understood that, like such a countless number of other ukases and edicts, they had lapsed into what President Cleveland called "innocuous desuetude." So late as November 1884, when a question arising under them was referred to the Governor General of Wilna, he declared that the May laws had been suspended.

Within two years—that is to say, by 1886—the power of Pobiedonostseff had grown so great, and the might of the ecclesiastical arm had so overshadowed the lay forces of the bureaucracy, that a blow could be struck at the Jews more cruelly shattering in its effects than any of those aimed by

the May laws. It has been pointed out that the Russian Hebrews had now, for more than twenty years, displayed a feverish, almost fierce, anxiety to educate their children. They had everywhere seized upon this as a great object of their lives, as the one thing above all others which promised better days for the Israel that was to come. And it has been explained how, under this potent stimulus, the Jewish children all over Russia attained a remarkably disproportionate percentage of proficiency in the schools, academies, and universities of the Empire.

With the true malignity of genius which makes a grand inquisitor, Pobiedonostseff struck at the heretic Jews through these children for whom they were sacrificing so much. For several years before experimental measures in this direction had been ventured upon. First, the number of Israelitish students to be admitted to the Military Academy for Medicine was limited to 5 per cent. of the entire number. (This, it may be said in passing, turned out to have been a preliminary step toward the complete exclusion by law of Jewish physicians from the army, which is now an accomplished fact.) Next, similar restrictions were placed upon the proportion of Jewish students in the Mining Institute and the Engineering Institute for Public Roads. Shortly after, the number of Jewish boys allowed to study in the Institute of Civil Engineers was cut down to 3 per cent., and the doors of the Veterinary Institute

at Kharkoff, the only school of its kind in Russia, were shut in their faces altogether.

It may be imagined with what dismay Jewish parents saw one professional avenue of escape from the ghetto after another being thus closed to their children. But this was mere play—the cold-blooded toying of a cat with a mouse—by comparison with what was to follow.

On December 5, 1886, and on June 26, 1887, the Czar signed two edicts which together gave the Minister of Public Education the power to restrict the number of Jewish pupils in every school, primary, advanced, technical, and the rest, throughout the Empire. This Minister, Delianoff, who had only recently been elevated to the post by the influence of Pobiedonostseff, and was then, as he has been ever since, acting wholly under the guidance of the Procurator of the Holy Synod, took prompt advantage of this Imperial warrant. He issued an order defining the maximum number of Jewish youths hereafter to be admitted to any and all the schools of Russia, from the most elementary grade up to the universities. Inside the Pale they were never to constitute more than 10 per cent. of the whole number of pupils; everywhere outside the Pale, with two exceptions, they were to be restricted to 5 per cent. The exceptions were St. Petersburg and Moscow, where 3 per cent. was to be the rule. This order remains to this day the law, and M. Delianoff, who issued it, figures now in the "Almanach de Gotha" as a Count.

The full significance of this barbaric measure can only be realised when it is remembered that in eighty-two towns of the Pale the Jews were more than half the inhabitants, and in four towns constituted over 80 per cent. of the population—and that, too, in 1884, before the latest crusade had chased literally hundreds of thousands of other Jews into these towns. It means, for example, that in towns like Mohilef, where, roughly speaking, there are 3000 Christians and 47,000 Jews, only one Jewish boy can attend school for every nine Christian boys who have been entered as pupils. There would be in this town of a school age, say, 600 Christians and 8000 Jewish youths. Even if we assume that every one of the former class went to school, (which, of course, is in Russia a wholly fantastic hypothesis,) we would have only sixty-six Hebrew lads entitled to even the rudiments of a public education—and the terrible corollary of 7934 others forbidden to go to school at all.

I have chosen for illustration the extreme case, so far as the proportion of Jews in a town is concerned. But when we consider that only a very tiny section of the "Christian" population of Russia ever dream of sending their children to school, whereas the poorest Jews make that the chief purpose of their lives, the illustration ceases to be exaggerated. To render the Jews dependent for educational facilities upon the schoolgoing propensities of the least ambitious and most sloth-

fully ignorant population in Europe was practically to debar them from education altogether.

This whole matter of education in Russia presents an aspect of the Russo-Jewish question which the Americans, English, and Germans, above all other peoples, will find instructive and impressive. Indifferent to learning as the great bulk of the Russian peasantry and lower classes are, they show more fondness for the schools than do their rulers. We have in Russia the absolutely unique spectacle of a Government exerting its powers to prevent its own Orthodox people obtaining an education. Since 1887 almost every year has brought its administrative order directing further restrictions upon the admission of pupils. Only a few months ago I was told in St. Petersburg of a new regulation, under way, which would make it practically impossible for the child of any poor man in Russia to get into school at all.

Doubtless these reactionary measures had their origin in the conviction that education was responsible for Nihilism. But, once started, this backward march in school matters became quickly merged in the general barbaric retrograde movement. The gloomy and wooden-headed despotism which is tearing down theatres in St. Petersburg, which suppresses news, songs, and literature alike, which treats as criminals and outcasts all who decline to worship relics and sacred pictures, which has restored the knout, and which to-day refuses to allow private charity to intervene between its stupid

helplessness and the terrors of a great famine—it is not strange that this despotism dislikes schools.

It only adds to the grotesque and savage imbecility of the thing to learn that this order limiting the percentage of Jewish pupils in schools was accompanied by another sharply reducing the number of Christian children who might thereafter be received, the effect being, of course, to still further cut down the Jewish percentage.

Credulity fairly staggers under the additional fact that when the Jews, after their first shock of amazement, meekly begged permission to establish more schools for their young at their own expense, they were met with a refusal.

There were at this time (1887) some 1200 Jewish schools, with a total attendance of 28,226 pupils. Of these schools 77 were more or less supported by the State; the rest were small private classes, quite often for technical instruction, with an average attendance of about 20 children. These schools have now almost wholly disappeared, in the convulsions and disorder of the past two years. From their environment, and the hopeless conditions surrounding the race which supported and filled them, it may be imagined that they never reached a high plane of excellence; indeed, they were in many cases merely a Russo-Jewish adaptation of the old Irish hedge school.

Such as they were, however, the Jews were prepared to multiply their number and assume

the entire expense of the education of their young. No poverty-stricken and oppressed people could have proposed a heavier self-sacrifice. Rich Hebrews in other lands backed up this offer by tenders of assistance — Baron Hirsch, for example, proffering a donation of $10,000,000 to found technical schools and institutes for the Russo-Jewish youth. In some few instances these offers were accepted. Philanthropic Jews were allowed to build a technical school at Vinitza and a mining institute at Gorlovka, both avowedly for the education of Jewish boys. But when they were opened, the Government coolly stepped in and compelled them to admit nine Christian youths in one case, nineteen in the other, for every Jewish pupil. Much more numerous were the instances in which the officials took the money offered by the Jews for the establishment of Jewish schools, and frankly put it in their own pockets.

These were mere local variations. The Minister of Public Instruction, so far as the central authority went, refused the petition of the Jews to be allowed to build schools of their own. With fine Oriental irony he invited their attention to the fact that the new order limiting Jewish scholars to a small percentage of the whole number was really in the interest and for the protection of the Jews, inasmuch as it now for the first time officially guaranteed their right to any share whatever in public school education.

Even Torquemada enjoyed his little joke, they say.

To preserve a historical balance, it is important to note that this first great anti-Jewish blow struck by Pobiedonostseff was coincident with the opening of the Lutheran persecution in the Baltic provinces. In the autumn of 1886, just about the time that the Council of Ministers was drafting the edicts mentioned above, the Czar's brother, the Grand Duke Vladimir, visited Riga, and with his characteristic brutality of frankness publicly warned the German populations of Courland and Livonia that it had been decided completely to Russianise them, peaceably if possible, but with any extremity of roughness if force became necessary. And in the spring of the following year the Ministerial order on Jewish education, or rather non-education, synchronised with the arbitrary edicts which forbade the German Lutheran pastors in the Baltic provinces longer to teach or control the schools they had built, and which changed the language in those schools from German to Russian, prohibited the use of German on the railways, and decreed the remodelling of the University of Dorpat over into a Russian institution.

As we go further we shall see the savage crusade against the Jews linked at every step with cruelties or treacherous wrongs perpetrated upon other non-Orthodox people living under the shadow of Czardom—now the proscription of the

Stundists, now the priest-hunts in Catholic Poland, now the exiling of the Molokani, now the shameless and excuseless betrayal of Finland—all parts of one great barbaric scheme.

The Ministerial order of early 1887, closing the schools to all but an infinitesimal fraction of Jewish youths, was a sufficient hint to all the officials, big and little, throughout Russia, who desired either to win favour in the highest circles or make a little money for themselves by harrying the Jews. That the persecution did not at once become general seems to have been due to the restraining influence of Count Dmitri Tolstoï, who, as Minister of the Interior, to the last managed to keep his head above the advancing tide of Pobiedonostseff's authority. In May of 1889 Tolstoï died, and thereafter nobody has so much as tried to stand up against the Procurator of the Holy Synod.

But even before Tolstoï's death, in fact from the date of the education order, the lynx-eyed underlings scattered over the Empire had seen well enough how things were drifting. While they to some extent pretended to please their immediate master, the Minister of the Interior, the spirit of all their actions was dedicated to the rising power, Pobiedonostseff. Evidently the best way to please him was to squeeze the heretic. Thus it happens that, while the years from 1883 to 1890 are ordinarily thought of as an interval interposed between two outbursts of militant anti-

Semitism, the truth is that the lull really covered only two or three years, and that the persecution whose horrors have finally aroused civilisation began in 1887.

The change which came over the attitude of the provincial authorities when they grasped the fact that Pobiedonostseff was the rising man, and that he was hostile to the Jews, showed itself at first by a revived activity in enforcing the long dormant and disused May laws. As I have said, these laws were limited in their jurisdiction to the Pale. Accordingly, everybody in uniform began busily hustling such Jews as still remained in the country parts of the fifteen prescribed governments off their land and into the towns, and either arresting or blackmailing any Israelites who dared to appear in the market-places of the Pale on Sunday.

This Sunday prohibition, which last autumn brought about the terrible riot at Starodoub, with the usual accompaniment of Jewish lives lost and Jewish shops and houses plundered and burned, is one of the most characteristic features of the anti-Jewish laws. The Hebrews, of course, religiously abstain from labour on Saturday. It was considered by Ignatieff an extremely smart trick to forbid them to do business on Sunday as well.

In its essence, this meant that the Jews could only have five earning days against other people's seven. Although there are laws on the books

prohibiting Christian labour or business on Sunday, they are a complete dead letter. Every traveller in Russia knows that Sunday in the markets and business streets differs in no respect from any other day, save that there are no Jews about. Having remained idle on Saturday for their own Sabbath, they are compelled to observe Sunday for the Christian Sabbath—the while the Christian himself works or barters from morning till night, and the market places are filled as well with Tartars, Gipsies, and Persians, whom no one molests.

This renewed driving of the rural Jews into the towns, already overcrowded, and this arbitrary curtailment of their chances of earning a livelihood soon produced most melancholy results. In every civilised country the Hebrew has a lower death rate and makes a better showing in vital statistics generally than the rest of the community. This fact, whether it be due to unique dietary laws, to exceptional supervision over marriages, or whatever other cause, remains a fact. In Russia alone this has not been the case. Insufficient food, wretched shelter, overwork, and the ceaseless strain and terror of a hunted animal have made him from the beginning a degenerate creature physically.

Yet even in Russia, up to the enforcement of the May Laws, it was supposed that Jews never suffered from phthisis. Throughout the reigns of Nicholas and Alexander II the army examiners

found no traces of this disease among the Jewish recruits. Very soon, however, after the Holy Synod began the completion of Ignatieff's work, and the swarming ghetto in each dirty, ill-built, undrained, half-starving town of the Pale saw with horror new crowds of homeless and destitute Jews being hounded in, to deepen the prevailing misery and share the fight for bread from day to day, there was a different story to tell. The rejections for phthisis, from nothing at all, rose to 6.5 per cent. among Jewish recruits, against 0.5 per cent. among all other Russians. Other maladies kept almost equal pace in ravaging these crowded quarters of hunger and helpless squalor. On the score of general physical unfitness, the rejections among Jewish youths of the conscription age mounted to 61.7 per cent. against 27.2 among the other recruits examined.

In the very latest drawing of recruits, that of January 1892, only 6 per cent. of the Jewish youths who presented themselves for the *tirage* passed the medical examiners, while of the Russians 65 per cent. were accepted.

These figures furnish a ghastly comment upon the Russian plea that their Jews are all rich usurers.

It may be imagined that in this outburst of official hostility not very strict attention was paid to keeping within the laws which it was pretended to enforce. As has been explained, every *tchinovnik* is his own law. Villages consisting almost wholly

of Jews were ransacked to find those of the race whose residence did not date back prior to May 1882, and these were all incontinently packed off to the towns. In this search many were found who had been born on the spot in the sixties or earlier, but who had no papers to prove it; off they went with the others. Again, there were cases of artisans, resident in one of these villages all their lives, who went for a week or a month to some other place for work; on their return they were treated as new-comers, their former residence being ignored. This happened to soldiers returning from service to their native village. An instance is recorded of a man living all his life in the village of Palitzki who was absent five days to get married, and on coming back to his home was driven out as a stranger having no domicile.

I could fill a chapter with incidents of this kind, many of them related to me by the victims themselves in Hamburg, Berlin, Königsberg, or here in London. But there is too much else of even a more painful sort to tell.

These were not the only tricks to which resort was had. The whole gamut of barefaced knavery was swept. To take one among a throng of examples, the immediate suburbs of large towns had heretofore, for municipal and other purposes, been treated as parts of the towns themselves. Now these were decreed to be villages, and all the Jews accordingly driven out of them into the densely

packed pest-holes of the towns. Impudence even went so far as to deny that Reshilovko, a place which had long been styled in all official documents as a town, was a town at all, and in its new and arbitrarily-acquired character as a village all the Jews had to leave it within forty-eight hours.

What has thus far been related happened, be it remembered, in the Pale, and between the years 1886 and 1890. Up to this latter date no attempt was made openly to revoke the permission of Alexander II, in 1865, under which hundreds of thousands of Jewish artisans, clerks, and others had moved eastward out of the Pale, and made homes for themselves all over Russia proper.

The difficulties under which these people laboured, even in the palmy days of the golden age, have been described in a preceding chapter. Naturally enough, such a fierce persecution could not break forth in the Pale without some of its effects being felt by the luckier Jews outside. These effects took many whimsical forms, according to the fancy of the Governor, the needs of the police, or the feelings of the population in each separate Government. In some *gubernia* the Jews experienced nothing more than a perceptible accession of rigour in examining their passports and guild warrants; in others, they began to be treated almost as if the protecting laws of 1865 had been annulled.

These laws, it will be remembered, permitted Jewish artisans to settle wherever they liked in Russia upon the condition of proving to the satisfaction of the local trade guild their proficiency in their handicraft. But, as I have said before, law in Russia is strictly a matter of construction. The same official will interpret the same law in three different and contradictory ways in as many hours if it seems important to do so. Accordingly the more active and unscrupulous Governors, Judges, and Chiefs of Police, sniffing the eager air of persecution blowing straight over the steppes from St. Petersburg, now all at once discovered that this word "artisan" ought to be looked into. The law said "artisans"—ah yes, but who were artisans?

The mere hint was enough. The Governor of Smolensk led off by deciding that butchers, bakers, vinegar manufacturers, and even glaziers, were not properly artisans. Many of these crafts had been living for years in Smolensk without the slightest hint of doubt as to their legal status; now they were all incontinently sent packing. The Senate was appealed to in the matter of the vinegar-makers and decided that they undoubtedly were artisans. This made no difference; the declaration of the local artificers' guilds to the contrary continued to be a better authority.

Very strange results were obtained by this outbreak of provincial definitions of the word artisan.

In one Government for example, musicians and cooks would be decided to be good artisans, while pavers and coachmen would be excluded. Perhaps in the adjoining Government the rule would be exactly reversed. Moreover, a handworker might be assured of his regularity one week and be visited by the police the next, because in the meantime the status of his trade had altered in the minds of the local authorities.

On a large number of the private railways of Russia the bulk of the engine-drivers were Jews. They had in fact almost as closely a monopoly in this employment as Scotchmen are said to enjoy as steamship engineers. They had obtained this because they were found to be soberer, more active and intelligent, and more to be depended upon, than the moujik. A secret circular was now sent out, informing the railway companies that engine-drivers were not artisans and that their Jewish employées must go. And of course go they did.

In Moscow twenty-four Jewish compositors were expelled upon the decision that printing was not a trade, but an art!

So matters went on into the year 1890, the position of the Jews becoming more and more intolerable as the spirit of the Holy Synod more fully permeated the ramified branches of the bureaucracy. It was reported about that the Czar regarded the escape alive of himself and

family from the terrible railway accident at Borki as the direct and miraculous intervention of Providence. The facts were that the imperial train was being driven at the rate of ninety versts an hour over a road calculated to withstand at the utmost a speed of thirty-five versts; that the engineer humbly warned the Czar of the danger, and was gruffly ordered to go still faster if possible; and that the miracle would have been the avoidance of calamity. But facts don't get about in Russia, or pass unrecognised if they do. What was apparent was that a great devotional mood had seized upon the Czar and the Court circles. The contagion spread like wildfire: in a twinkling officials, soldiers, policemen, traders, moujiks, flocked to the churches, cabmen blocked the streets in front of shrines to make their obeisances from the driver's box, and the country roads were populated once more with concourses of tramping pilgrims.

It was in the height of this sentimental religious fervour that reports leaked out about the Government's intention to revoke the guarantees of 1865, and put the May laws in force all over the Empire. Copies of the proposed edicts were obtained, smuggled out over the frontier, and published to the world. The Holy Synod stopped counting its beads long enough to issue a categorical denial that any such measure had ever been discussed, and Russian Ambassadors at foreign Courts were

instructed to give solemn assurances that the report was pure invention.

When they had lied long enough, the edicts which they swore had never existed even in thought were promulgated. It was a triumph of mediæval barbarism. Everywhere throughout Russia it was understood that, to celebrate God's protection of the Czar at Borki, there was to be a burnt-offering of Jews.

H.I.H. THE GRAND DUKE SERGE

CHAPTER X

THE APPOINTMENT OF SERGE

The whole year of 1890 was clouded, as has been said, by reports of new and savage laws about to be decreed against the Jews. In July the *Times* published in London, from its accomplished St. Petersburg correspondent, Mr. George Dobson, what turned out to be a tolerably accurate forecast of these projected laws. The statement was solemnly denied by Russian officials, as were all other rumours of prospective persecution, but through the indiscretion or venality of local administrators it became known that these denials were lies made out of whole cloth. It was discovered that a series of questions had been addressed to the provincial Governors by the Minister of the Interior, each asking an expression of opinion upon some proposed new penalty or increased restriction, and that an overwhelming majority of these Governors had hastened to express admiring approval of these barbarous propositions. No other answers, of course, could have been expected. To prevent ambiguity in the replies, the intended acts of oppression had been carefully specified. All the Governors had

to do was to copy these and say "Yes" to them. Then they were laid before the Czar as the recommendations of his official deputies throughout the Empire.

I have said that their assent was a matter of course. In the first place, every new oppressive law increases the chances for gain to the Governor and all his creatures; inquiry as to his approval in such a case is like asking an official in another country whether he would like an increase of salary. More important still, an interrogatory of this kind is a plain indication of what the central authority wants—and to discover this and satisfy it is the controlling passion of every Russian official's abreast.

One of the Governors did, however, salve his conscience—perhaps also his pocket—by revealing the text of these Ministerial inquiries to the Jews. It may be said in passing that there are to this day scores of officials in Russia who are openly fervent Jew-baiters, yet who secretly provide information of this kind to the Hebrew community for pay.

Other Governors, being informed by these inquiries of the intentions of the Ministry, began at once to act as if the suggestions which they had approved were already laws. In October the second anniversary of the Czar's escape from death at Borki was celebrated, and stories were circulated to the effect that the Czar had received personal revelations as to the intervention of God

to save his life. The ignorant, drunken, and greedy village priests, who had now obtained a welcome addition to their incomes by having been given control over the primary schools, eagerly circulated these tales, and built up the wildest and most fantastic concoctions of miraculous visions with which to further darken the poor wits of the superstitious peasantry.

The Czar himself seems to have been affected by the outburst of fanatical orthodox excitement which this Borki anniversary precipitated. I have been told by a trustworthy man, who himself saw the document referred to, this story in illustration. An influential Russian dignitary, with brains enough to see what stupid mischief Russia was doing herself, contrived to have put into the Czar's own hands a memorial tersely setting forth the actual facts of the Jewish question, recounting the miseries inflicted upon helpless and unoffending people, and showing how inevitably this criminal folly must react upon the Empire. Alexander III read the paper carefully and wrote on the margin that he had been much impressed and touched by it. "But," the imperial hand added, "we must never forget that it was the Jews who crucified our Lord and spilled his priceless blood!"

In this same October, a score of Governors in different provinces, apparently by some malignant concert, began driving out all the Jews who had charge of, or were employed in, flour mills. In more intelligent times they had been drafted into

this business—in fact given a practical monopoly of it—for the sole reason that they were the only people who knew enough to conduct it. Now, in spite of the fact that without them the flour mills would have to be closed, they were all expelled on the plea that they were not artisans. It is to incredible idiocies of this sort that the famines in Russia are largely due. In 1887, Mr. Dering, Secretary of the British Embassy at St. Petersburg, reported that there had been "permanent famine" since 1866 in 148 out of the 625 administrative districts of Russia, and that in 71 of these alone there were 300,000 chronic paupers. It was in these districts that many of the flour mills were now closed, on account of the Crucifixion!

The public notoriety of the St. Petersburg expulsions dates from this same fateful October of 1890. They had really been going on for a year or two, but so quietly as to have escaped general notice. To this day it is practically impossible to get information about the clearance of the Jews from the capital on the Neva. I have obtained some figures to be printed in their proper place in the narrative; but they had to be compiled from the most recondite sources, and have not only never been published, but will convey novel information to the St. Petersburg Jews themselves. The truth is that the Jews of St. Petersburg have never had any organisation or cohesive bond of union. They scarcely know one another; they have never acted together. The extent to which

this is true of Moscow and other large Russian cities would amaze those who talk so glibly about the close solidarity and trades-union combinations of the Jewish communities. But it is peculiarly the case in St. Petersburg.

The then Chief of Police, General Groesser, a curious, not to say comical, despot, about whose whimsical and purely savage vagaries a volume might be written, had been quietly chasing the Jews out for a long time. Now, under the impulse of this new craze for persecution, he began to issue public orders concerning the marked men of the race. For example, on October 30 he promulgated directions that, in each case where a Hebrew was sent away for lack of residential rights, his whole family must be packed off with him.

The Minister of War, Vannoffsky, was not going to lag behind Dournovo, Groesser, and the rest in putting into action the Czar's pious feelings. Military orders were issued directing that all Jews should be driven from the Caucasus, to prevent their perverting the religious faith of the army!

At about the same time a decree from the Minister of Instruction extended to converted or baptised Jews the provisions of the previous law limiting the proportion of Jewish students to be allowed in universities. This affected a large class of the brightest young scholars in the university towns, who, for the sake of pursuing their studies, had made the sacrifice of formally accepting Christianity as it is understood in Russia. Now

most of them found their sacrifice to have been in vain—and were sharply chased back into the ghettos.

In the succeeding month, a ukase was issued ordering that in the future no Jew should be baptised unless his entire family became converts at the same time. This, it was explained, was to circumvent the device adopted in their despair by numerous Hebrew families threatened with ruin and enforced exile—viz., of sacrificing one male member of the household to the Christian font as a kind of scapegoat, and then enrolling his relatives as his servants, so that all might remain.

Concurrently it was decreed that Jews should no longer be received into the Catholic, Lutheran, or other dissenting folds, but must be baptised, if at all, into the Orthodox Church. This monopoly having been given to the Orthodox priesthood, they promptly established a probationary term of six months for would-be converts from Judaism. Up to that time anybody could be baptised immediately upon application, and many stories were afloat like that of the great banker, Horwitz, who is said to have once been warned away from the Hotel Dussaux in Moscow, and to have gone out and returned within the hour with a certificate of baptism. This swiftness of procedure was made possible by the rivalry between the Lutheran and the Orthodox pastors for baptismal fees. The moment the latter were given a monopoly they sat down and blackmailed the Jew at their leisure.

This question of the "conversion" of Jews is a most difficult one about which to secure facts in Russia. I have shown in previous chapters how strenuously Nicholas strove, alike by forcible abduction and torture and by bribes, to break down Judaism as a religion. Everybody will give you a different estimate as to results. Russians of education and position have gravely assured me that the baptised Jews greatly outnumbered those who remained in their creed, which of course is absurd nonsense. But the Russians discover and suspect Jews now everywhere, as Richard III saw ghosts in his tent on Bosworth Field. Their mania for this is like that which prompted good people in the time of Eugene Sue's "Wandering Jew" to believe that every third man was a Jesuit in disguise.

Jewish authorities, on the other hand, say that the "conversions" have been on an average only 1300 per year—or something like .002 per cent. of adults.

However this may be, the formal desertions from Judaism have been almost wholly confined to the educated classes and to residents in cities like St. Petersburg and Moscow. In this latter place, of which I saw much more than of any other Russian city, the proportion of "converts" has always been exceptionally large. The story is told there of the Lutheran Church, of which all the officials, beadles, ushers, and the like were named Blumenthal, Rosenberg, Morgenstern, and

so on, and into which, one Sunday when special services had drawn a large attendance, a Russian wag strolled with his hat on. The "baptised" dignitaries, scandalised, hurried toward him with indignant gestures. "Oh, I beg pardon," he said, looking blandly from one Semitic face to another; "I thought I was in a synagogue."

Very often, in the two great cities mentioned, one will find Hebrew families in which the parents hold by the old faith, but have had their children baptised as communicants in the English church. Where the sons are destined for commerce, this Anglican connection is especially valued. In such cases, it is hardly necessary to add that the claims of religion rest lightly on both parents and children. I encountered in the south of Russia an elderly Jewish merchant, who had lived in Alabama in slavery days, and had subsequently served in the Confederate army. In the quaintest imaginable jargon of Jiddish, German, and half-forgotten English "as she is spoke" in the cotton belt, he told me that he was himself too old to change his creed now, but that his sons were being brought up as Christians. This kindly old man was almost frantic with delight when he learned that I was a Freemason. It was many years since he had met one before, because the order is most sternly forbidden and outlawed in Russia. He wore on his watch-chain, however, the jewel of the State Lodge of Alabama, and confided to me that the Russians were far too ignorant and stupid

to ever guess that it was a masonic emblem. After this subject had come to be mentioned between us, it was absolutely impossible to get him to talk of anything else. I was eager to obtain from him information upon events in his own neighbourhood, of the present day. To my every question he would reply, "Oh, mister, the suffers is most pitiful,"—and straightway hark back to Masonry on the Mississippi "befo' the wah." He told me that, however lackadaisical some of the other brethren might be, he used to be always on hand before his lodge was opened. I recall, with a certain effect of pathos, how he assured me, with tears in his eyes, that the dream of his life was to sell out and end his days in some country where he could attend lodge meetings every afternoon. In his long solitude he had so brooded upon masonic recollections that they had come to colour all his views of nationality, religion, business, even existence itself. I shall never forget how his countenance fell when I confessed to him that in England one's lodge only met once a month, and that even then I generally forgot to attend.

The outbreak of administrative persecution, to which allusion has been made, with its gloomy background of constantly increasing rumours of fresh oppressive laws to come, stirred what remained of liberalism in Russia to protest.

The *Novosti*, now the only paper of importance which had not joined in the anti-Semitic hue and

cry, on November 6, 1890, reprinted from Katkoff's *Russian Messenger* of 1858 a curious and forgotten document, the resurrection of which came like a slap in the face to Alexander III. In that third year of the reign of his father, "the Liberator Czar," a paper called *Illustration* made some casual remark which was considered insulting to the Jews. Thereupon 147 of the best-known Russian authors, poets, journalists, professors, scientists, &c., signed a protest against offensive allusions of this kind. In this list, which the *Novosti* now reprinted, were the names of Turgenieff, Bestujeff, Kostomaroff, Kriloff, Pogodin, Katkoff, Aksakoff, and dozens of others of the first rank in the world of letters and of thought. There was grim satire in this republication of these names, which the censors saw and appreciated enough promptly to serve the *Novosti* with a first warning.

But there was something more than irony in the act. It became known that the reprinting of the 1858 protest was in the nature of an experiment preliminary to the publication of a protest of 1890, with Count Lyof Tolstoï leading the list of signatures. This new memorial was understood to be much milder in tone than the other, and to have been signed by practically all the literary and scientific lights of the empire. I say "understood," because it was never printed. The chief of the censor's office, M. Feoktistoff, sent a circular around among the Russian editors forbidding

them, under the severest penalties, to publish what he termed this "impudent and senseless" petition.

It was characteristic of Russia that this same Feoktistoff had himself signed the infinitely more vigorous protest of 1858.

This still-born petition was the last discernible sign of Russian Liberalism, so called. In the carnival of brute force which ensued—this terrible contest between autocracy and assassination which the world still watches in round-eyed amazement—the man with a petition had no place.

What is now going on in Russia is so awful that we forget how shocking the events of the winter of 1890 seemed at the time. Nihilists were being tried by scores, and sentences of life-long imprisonment or exile meted out right and left. One murder plot after another was revealed, or invented—each followed by a cloud of arrests or sequestrations. Officers high in the army and in aristocratic circles shot themselves to escape a worse fate. Universities were closed, and hundreds of students dragged off to jail.

In Poland the brute Gourko instituted a reign of terror novel even in that unhappy land. In mid-winter 14,000 Polish engineers, conductors, firemen, and mail clerks on the railways were summarily thrown out of employment, and the decree was posted up that henceforth none but Russians should be allowed to work on Polish railways. Simultaneously, 11,000 German and Austrian

subjects, clerks, salesmen, agents, and the like employed by private firms throughout Poland were expelled from the kingdom without warning and without excuse. Poles who dared to comment upon these outrageous measures were knouted to death, or marched publicly in chains off to Siberia. The huge and ever-increasing Army of Occupation—already furnishing in Poland one soldier for every twelve men, women, and children of the civic population—assumed fresh licence to plunder, maltreat, and outrage the people in imitation of their General. Poles cannot trust themselves to talk of the horrors which since Christmas of 1890 have been their portion. There are no words for these monstrous deeds. I have myself been told by eye-witnesses, by relatives of the victims, stories of the treatment of gently-nurtured Polish girls, and of dutiful and irreproachable Polish wives and mothers, which I could no more listen to with dry eyes than they could relate to me unmoved.

So the New Year came—ushering in the year of our Lord 1891—destined to be the most tragic in modern Russian history.

While rumour was still busy with those mysterious anti-Semitic laws which were to come, a scattering fire of minor decrees of persecution was maintained. During the opening months, another Minister, Manassein, Minister of Justice, joined the group who had already prostituted their departments to the savage resolution of Pobiedonostseff,

and issued an order that no more Jewish barristers should be admitted, and that those already practising should be expelled. The Jewish paper, the *Voskhod*, was suppressed. General Gourko commanded, apparently out of pure wantonness of brutality, that hereafter all Jewish recruits in Poland when sent to be examined by the inspection committees should be marched in *étape*, that is, chained together like criminals and in the company of jail-birds. There is rarely lacking a comic side to these things in Russia; in early February there was a public agitation inside the St. Petersburg Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals in favour of having the Society interfere with "the cruel manner in which the Jews slaughter cattle."

It was vaguely understood at this time that one Minister, Vishnegradsky, was standing out against the final declaration of a Jewish crusade. This bright manipulator of finance, as we have seen, did not owe his advancement to Pobiedonostseff. He was the Czar's own selection. The rise of M. Vishnegradsky is curiously characteristic of his country and his race. He was the son of a poor village priest, and came up to St. Petersburg to seek his fortune with scarcely the traditional green three-rouble note in his pocket. He was fortunate enough to attract the attention of the Hebrew banker, Baron Gunzburg, and in this way engrafted himself upon the great railway and contracting projects of that sanguine period.

He had not only a smart eye for figures, but a ready tongue and a forehead of brass. Even after he had become an official, and was a wealthy man to boot, he used to be retained by Messrs. Warschoffsky, Horwitz, and other great promoters to attend meetings of railway companies and commercial organisations generally, and make speeches in favour of their interests. An occasion was mentioned to me upon which his fee for his services was 15,000 roubles.

A friend of mine in St. Petersburg, an elderly man who has known M. Vishnegradsky closely for many years, assured me that, with the possible exception of Dr. Miquel, he regarded the Russian Minister of Finance as the cleverest administrator in Europe. But in his position he does not rely upon official ability alone. "Vishnegradsky," said my friend, "is very sly. He saw that Pobiedonostseff created a great impression upon the Czar by every now and again quoting a Bible text in his conversation. Now when Vishnegradsky talks with the Czar he quotes two texts where the Procurator would only introduce one. Thus he is very strong with the Czar."

The Finance Minister need not have been so tremendously clever to discern the monetary and commercial ruin which an extreme anti-Semitic policy would involve. It can well be understood how, for the credit of his own department, he should have resisted to the last the increasing pressure of the forces of fanaticism, intolerance,

PRINCE DOLGOROUKOFF

and savage lust for plunder which the Grand Inquisitor was marshalling. For one thing, he was just bringing to a successful close a great State loan, to be negotiated by the chief Hebrew houses of Europe, a loan which should crown his administration with honour. How necessary was it, therefore, to keep quiet about the Jews!

On April 7, 1891, M. Vishnegradsky was able to announce to his Imperial master, and two days later to the public, that he had concluded arrangements with the Rothschilds, Bleichröder, and another Jewish banking-house for a loan of 600,000,000f.

One might well believe that the Czar and his Jew-baiting Ministers had been holding their hands till this announcement could be made. Almost on the morrow the blow fell.

Some weeks before, it had been announced that the Prince Dolgoroukoff, who had been Governor-General of the Province of Moscow for many years, and who was spending the winter in Paris, had retired from his office, and that his successor would be the Czar's third brother, the Grand Duke Serge.

At the time the excitement over Nihilist plots and the open turbulence of the students was so great that it was said and believed that the Czar intended to leave St. Petersburg altogether, and restore Moscow to its ancient dignity as the imperial capital. The appointment of Serge was explained on the theory that he was going to

prepare the historic seat of the Muscovy Czars against the coming of his august brother.

The true story of the appointment is quite a different affair. It has never been told in print, and it is so vitally connected at every step with the most painful aspects of the Jewish persecution that I feel no apology need be offered for briefly recounting it here.

The old Governor-General, Prince Dolgoroukoff, was a very characteristic and likeable type of the best that the ancient Russian aristocracy affords. A descendant of Rurik, the head of a family with a thousand times more noble Russian blood than flows in the Imperial veins, and which more than once has been in rivalry with the Romanoffs for the throne itself, the Prince perpetuated in his person the distinctive qualities and traits of a good boyar. Full of the sense of dignity in his descent and his office, he yet gave courteous audience daily to all, rich and poor alike, who had the slightest claim upon his time. Although by nature luxurious, perhaps indolent, he resolutely forced himself to supervision of every detail of his official duties. He was specially watchful in keeping his subordinates in place, and in sharply preventing their usurpation of the smallest iota of his powers and responsibilities. In short, he was such a Governor-General as very few Russian provinces ever had.

He was queer in other ways For one thing he was honest. Moreover, he liked to see justice

done. He was quite capable of publicly punishing and humiliating an under-official whom he caught injuring or robbing a poor man.

He had been just to the Jews, nothing more. The oppression which the law clearly dictated had been meted out to them in Moscow as elsewhere. Only Dolgoroukoff would not allow his underlings to blackmail and persecute them outside the law.

Such a great noble, not very pious, not at all servile, who was actually on amiable terms with educated and able Jews, was naturally an eyesore to Pobiedonostseff and the Jew-baiting clique. So long as he held supreme office in Moscow—the most important dignity below royalty itself—no crusade upon Israel could be successfully embarked upon. The Holy Synod marked the old Governor-General down in its black books.

The civil Governor of Moscow, Prince Golitzyn, was a man much more after the Inquisitor's heart—a dull and malignant man, who could not possibly have been given office in any other country under the sun, and in Russia only obtained it through powerful aristocratic connections. This Golitzyn had long striven, in a muddle-headed way, to distinguish himself by effusive brutality of zeal in carrying out what he imagined to be the Czar's desires. To his chagrin, no recognition had come, and Dolgoroukoff kept so vigilant a watch and curb upon him that he despaired ever being allowed to win it.

Prince Golitzyn's estate at Illinskoie marches

with that of the Grand Duke Serge, and the two men are intimate associates. It is supposed that through this arose the suggestion of Serge's taking Dolgoroukoff's place. However suggested, there was soon a powerful cabal formed to bring this result about. Various sinister figures in shady politics were brought into the intrigue—Ignatief and Suvorin among them—and it was not difficult to enlist Pobiedonostseff in it. Perhaps he invented the Hebraic pretext, which was finally agreed upon as a basis for action. At all events, M. Alexeieff, the Mayor of Moscow, wrote a letter to Pobiedonostseff declaring that there were 120,000 Jews in Moscow (there never were over 30,000), that they were ruining religion, sapping loyalty, and destroying trade, and that they had evidently bribed Dolgoroukoff to acquiesce in all their scoundrelly schemes.

Pobiedonostseff showed this letter to the Czar, and so played upon his suspicion of dishonest officials, his aversion to the Jews, and his desire to give his brother some show of usefulness in the State, that the appointment of Serge was secured. This desire is intelligible enough, since the problem of what to do with the ever-multiplying swarm of Grand Dukes lies very heavily upon the Czar's mind. There are at the present writing not less than twenty-four of these princes of the blood. Each upon his birth has set aside a certain sum, partly family property, partly from the public funds, which will have grown by compound in-

terest to the capital amount of 2,000,000 roubles by the time he attains his majority. Alexander III has a provident mind, and early in his reign occupied himself with devising means of combating this Grand-ducal scourge. By a family statute of July 1886, he ordained that hereafter the title of Grand Duke should not descend beyond the grandson of a reigning Czar, and at the same time he greatly increased the difficulties in the way of Grand Dukes marrying. Morganatic marriages are sternly forbidden, and the Imperial consent to other alliances is given in a grudging fashion. But it still is not likely that Serge would have been given such an important post, had not the intrigue against his predecessor been so astutely mixed up with the Jewish question.

This base device of blackening Prince Dolgoroukoff's character is still employed, despite the fact that the octogenarian Governor-General died in Paris very shortly after his enforced resignation. To this day every Russian official has at his tongue's end the malicious lie that Dolgoroukoff was in the pay of the Jews, and continually borrowed large sums from Lazarus Poliakoff, which he was never asked to repay, to discharge the interest on his enormous debts.

The falsehood is as foolish as it is mean. Prince Dolgoroukoff lived and died a very wealthy man. One estate alone of the several he possessed yielded an annual income of 46,000 roubles. At the time of his death he had a current deposit

of 70,000 roubles in a single Moscow bank. These are facts within my own knowledge.

The Grand Duke Serge—a scrawny, hollow-eyed, narrow-browed man of thirty-five, everywhere throughout European Courts known to be the least intelligent and respectable Romanoff since the time of Paul, and in Russia familiarly called by a name which involves offences hardly to be hinted at in type—was in March gazetted as the new Governor-General of Moscow.

There is the greatest difficulty in speaking fittingly of this person. A writer in the Pompeian decadence might have shrunk from saying all there is to be said about Serge. There are men in the mines in Siberia, or were a few years ago, who were exiled by the old Czar for having been associated with this son of his in conduct of the most debased and abominable sort. There is no mystery about this in Russia. Everybody knows who is meant when "the classic" is mentioned. No one ever professes doubt as to the man's character and habits. English-speaking peoples have become more familiar with his name than with that of any other Romanoff prince, for the reason that, in 1884, he married a Hessian princess, the daughter of the late Princess Alice. This childless lady remains a wife only in name. Nothing could be more tragically pitiful than the way in which, a couple of years ago, she was prevailed upon to join the Greek church, on the assurance of Serge's chaplain and of Count

Stenbock-Fermer, his Intendant, that her nominal husband would alter his demeanour toward her once she was in the Orthodox fold. It is known that Abbot John of Cronstadt, the most important religious figure in Russia, had the courage to ask her if her "conversion" was not obtained under these abhorrent circumstances, and was fiercely warned by the Czar to mind his own business. It is needless to say that the pledges thus given were not kept. Serge continues the unspeakable thing he was, and is hissed by the populace on the rare occasions when he appears in public in Moscow.

It was to "purify" the city for the entry of this obscene simpleton that the Cossacks and police made that famous midnight descent upon the poor Jewish quarter in Moscow which ushered in the new persecution. How this first raid, recalling nothing else so much as an attack by savages upon a frontier settlement in American colonial days, was followed by the inhuman sacking and clearing of an entire suburban district; how there came the edicts, sentencing practically the whole Jewish population of Moscow to exile and beggary; how thick and fast thereafter succeeded the ukases which have turned every part of Russia into a hell of torment to an entire race—this is what remains to be told.

CHAPTER XI

HOLY MOSCOW'S TRAGIC PASSOVER

To even begin to comprehend Russia, one must have seen Moscow. Viewed solely as a spectacle, I should think there is nothing else in the world more remarkable. Considered as the key to the strange, baffling enigma of the retrogressive Tartar Empire in Europe, it furnishes the most fascinating and enthralling of studies. Frankly, Moscow ought to have a book by itself. To compress mention of it into a few paragraphs confronts me as a necessity, which is also a grief.

This weird, Arabian Night's dream of a metropolis conveys to eye and mind alike the impression of being lost on the map—of having strayed a thousand miles or so westward out of its reckoning. The spectator from the cupola of Ivan's tower beholds a vast barbaric encampment sprawling over a space which a London might occupy—a veritable Asiatic city of white and pale red walls, low, green roofs, Oriental gardens, and still more Oriental domes and minarets. These domes rise on every side—to the number, they say, of nearly 2000—some green or blue, some glowing with burnished gold, like poppy-heads and ox-eyed

daisies above a field of mixed clover. At intervals tall slender towers lift themselves up like palms, to flower at the top in a lacework of engirdling balcony. Around this a man is for ever walking, day and night, to watch for fires—just as they were doing in Bokhara a thousand years ago.

In the centre of all, high-banked upon the riverside, looms the historic Kremlin, with its Tartar name, its white-and-gold mosques dating from remote pre-Tartar times, and its huge red palace, built by that modern Tartar, Nicholas, less than fifty years back, yet looking more savage than all the rest.

Gazing upon this spectacle, one forgets that he is only a thirty hours' ride from German soil. He seems immeasurably nearer to Samarcand than to any civilised portion of the globe.

And this is what Moscow feels. Its interests and its affections turn ever eastward.

St. Petersburg by comparison is a pitiful thing —a dreary, commonplace, pretentious imitation of alien standards, with wide, empty streets, huge, desolate-looking palaces, and a sparse population which seems no more at home than does an Ogallalla chief in a silk hat. St. Petersburg represents what the Czars have desired that Russia should pretend to be. Moscow represents what Russia really is.

Moscow has little that is characteristic to show of the times since Ivan the Terrible. It is true that the Romanoffs came from the neighbourhood

—their mediæval boyar residence in the Varvarka is still a sight for tourists—but two of their three generations, what with establishing a dynasty, waging foreign wars, and fighting the Nikon schism, had no time for building, and Peter the Great built a capital for himself on the Neva instead. Moscow, too, bore scarcely any part in the European masquerade begun by Peter, which was sunk into an orgy by his widow, niece, daughter, and idiot grandson, and lifted into a tragedy by the Ascanien wife of this fool. Moscow through all this century of neglect and desertion held its peace with true Eastern patience. When the time of sacrifice came, it burned itself on the altar without reluctance, without hesitation. All that is truly fine in barbarism shines in the history of Moscow.

As one would expect, it is in Moscow that the lamp of Pan-Slavism has been kept alight. It has been the home of successive generations of national spokesmen and leaders who ceased not to protest against the Court effort to Germanise Russia. It was here that Aksakoff uttered the famous watch-words of the reactionary party, "It is time to go home!" Here, too, only a few years ago, the Mayor, M. Alexeieff, made the celebrated speech about planting the double-cross of the Greek orthodoxy upon the Mosque of St. Sophia in Constantinople.

The people of Moscow live almost without newspapers, or, better, without European news.

Scarcely a breath of the outside Western world touches them. The untravelled among them have only the vaguest and most childlike notions about Berlin, Vienna, or London; and these notions, when they are not indifferent, are profoundly contemptuous. Their devotion to their barbaric Church, its ritual, its fast-days, and its miracle-working ikons, puts to shame the perfunctory observances of St. Petersburg. They think of the Protestants and Catholics of Europe as mere unimportant sects. They feel themselves to be, as they are, the citizens of Russia's true autocratic and ecclesiastical capital. They never doubt that in good time the Czar and the Holy Synod, sick of the vanities and poor Western imitations of St. Petersburg, will return to their real home, Holy Moscow.

Moscow has much the same feeling toward the Jews that the Emirs of Bokhara might have—that is, one of contemptuous tolerance in good-humoured times, of grim ferocity when the ugly mood is on. The mere suggestion that the Czar and the Holy Synod actively disliked them would be enough to provoke a persecution. These Moscovians, however, would have no thought of a fear of consequences such as might deter the Bokharan despot. They are proudly incredulous of Europe's power to make them afraid. Once, indeed, the French, under the mighty Napoleon, did reach the Holy City and stable their horses in St. Basil's; but the result of this invasion is such an

awful landmark in history that the Moscow imagination never conceives the possibility of its repetition.

Hence, when it becomes known in Moscow that Western Europe, and particularly that meddlesome part of it presided over by the Lord Mayor of London, is protesting against something which Moscow is doing, the news impels Moscow promptly to do that something with increased fervour and energy.

As Moscow is the heart, the core, of the real Russia, so her treatment of the Jews during this terrible year 1891 most truly typifies the persecution throughout the empire. As was said at the outset, it would require many big volumes adequately to present the history of this persecution. It is not within my power or the proper scope of this work to tell the tithe of what happened in Moscow alone. But I have chosen to dwell at greatest lengths upon the events in Moscow, because it is here that one gets the clearest view of the foul hypocrisy, the meanness, the stupidity, and the savagery which have all over Russia marked this latest crusade.

In other places, too, it has been possible for an apologist to plead in extenuation that the brutality and violence were the work of the small local authorities, and that it was unjust to hold the Imperial Government responsible for the acts of obscure and remote agents. But in Moscow, as I have shown, the conspiracy began upon the very steps of the throne. A brother of the Czar

was made the stalking-horse of the plot to defame and dispossess an honest and tolerant Governor-General and to establish the Jew baiters in power. The Holy Synod openly proclaimed the necessity of "purifying" Moscow from the presence of Jews before the Imperial Grand Duke Serge entered upon his office.

Whatever may be said of the persecution elsewhere, there is no difficulty in fixing direct responsibility for the unspeakable events of Moscow upon Pobiedonostseff, Dournovo, and Alexander III.

The general theory among the Moscow Jews is that in March 1891 they numbered about 30,000. It is very difficult to get at the facts. As has been said, the Mayor of Moscow, in a letter to Pobiedonostseff, unblushingly placed their number at 120,000. The man upon whose information and candour I relied most of all in Moscow gave me the following estimate, which is somewhat lower than that popularly made, but may be accepted as approximately correct:

City of Moscow.

Legal Divisions.	Families.	Souls.
A. Artisans and poorer classes; two-thirds of whom were expelled from March–June 1891	3,500	17,500
B. "Circular" people; expulsions now going on	800	4,000
*C. Merchants of the First Guild	120	700
*D. Professional and higher education	200	800
Total	4,620	23,000

* Not touched as yet.

Province of Moscow.

Legal Divisions.	Families.	Souls.
E. Suburb of Marina Rostscha; extremely poor people	400	2,400
F. Rest of province; all classes	500	2,600
Grand total	5,520	28,000

The distinction between the city proper and the province is important, because within the former the Cossack Chief of Police, Yourkoffsky, was supreme, whereas in the suburbs and elsewhere throughout the district Prince Golitzyn is responsible for what has been done. It is with reference to the latter in particular that documents exist which will come as a surprise, I venture to think, to the civilised world.

During the month of March, General Kostanda, a Greek born in Odessa, and then commandant of the troops in the Province of Moscow, was summoned to St. Petersburg to receive the edict appointing the Grand Duke Serge Governor-General, and get his own authorisation to act as *locum tenens* until the Prince should take up his new post. General Kostanda, a decent wooden man, returned to Moscow wearing a long face. To a police officer who met him at the station he gloomily confided the fact that he had orders to settle the Jewish question in Moscow before Easter.

Within sight of the walls of the Kremlin—hemmed in away from the river, between that sprawling palace enclosure and the famous Found-

ling Hospital—lies one of the most deplorable slums which any of the world's great cities contains. It is the Zariadie quarter, and was the home of most of Moscow's poorer Jews. Here in huge *podvories*, or houses serving at once as tenements for the swarm of resident occupiers, and as furnished apartment dwellings for Jews coming into Moscow on temporary business, lived many thousands of the Hebrew colony—at least half of the city's Israelitish population. These *podvories* all have distinctive names. The largest of them, the Glebovskaya Podvoryeh, has a melancholy fame in the local history of the Moscow Jews. To this vast rickety old hive every strange Hebrew entering Holy Moscow used to be escorted from the city gate by mounted Cossacks; here he was compelled to live during the three days of his allotted stay. It seems incredible, but there can be no real doubt that two years ago between 2500 and 3000 Jews of all ages were domiciled in this one building. It is the property of the Moscow Eye Hospital, and the lessee, himself a Jew, enjoyed from it an annual income of 25,000 roubles. Now he has thrown up his lease in despair, and the great edifice is entirely tenantless.

A few days after General Kostanda's return, this whole Zariadie quarter was surrounded at midnight by the police, the mounted Cossacks who serve under police control, and even the city firemen. Strong forces were posted on the Moskvaretsk and Ustinsky bridges, to prevent escape to

the right bank of the river, and all the streets and passages leading to the Ilyinka were closely guarded. Then, under Yourkoffsky's personal supervision, the whole quarter was ransacked, apartments forced open, doors smashed, every bedroom without exception searched, and every living soul, men, women and children, routed out for examination as to their passports. The indignities which the women, young and old alike, underwent at the hands of the Cossacks may not be described.

As a result, over 700 men, women and children were dragged at dead of night through the streets to the *outchastoks* or police stations. They were not even given time to dress themselves, and they were kept in this noisome and overcrowded confinement for thirty-six hours, almost all without food, and some without water as well. Of these unhappy people, thus driven from their beds, and haled off to prison in the wintry darkness, some were afterward marched away by *étape*, that is, chained together with criminals and forced along the roads by Cossacks. A few were bribed out of confinement; the rest were summarily shipped to the Pale. To-day they are scattered—who knows where?—over the whole face of the earth. They were chiefly artisans and petty traders. There was no charge of criminality or of leading an evil life against any of them. They were arrested and banished whether their passports were in order or not, and with them, alike to the *outchastoks* and into exile went their children and womenkind.

THE COSSACK, GEN. YOURKOFFSKY

(*Late Chief of Police of Moscow*)

With the exception of a partial account in the *Moskovsk Viedomosti* of April 9, 1891, nothing was ever printed about this astonishing event save a note in the St. Petersburg papers of April 12, which was transmitted to the continental press as well, stating briefly that "150 Jews had been arrested in Moscow." This is worth noting, because it is the only reference to the Moscow barbarities which has ever been permitted to appear in the Russian press from that day to this. It also has a value as a characteristic example of Russian veracity. The number of frightened wretches thus descended upon and dragged from their homes was in reality about five times as great as was stated.

Startling as the number is, it would have been much larger but for a fortuitous accident. One of the police officers, who knew in advance of this barbarous project, happened to be a baptised Jew. He risked Siberia to save the friendless people of his blood. His first recourse was to send a warning note to the Rabbi, but the latter was attending a wedding somewhere and could not be found. Then the police agent sent a man in a cab to notify Jewish shopkeepers whom he could trust not to betray him. In this way a large number were warned, and did not go home that night.

It may be imagined that the tidings of this outrage filled the Jewish community of Moscow with consternation. Perhaps that is too strong a

word. Israel is an inveterate optimist—and more so in Moscow than elsewhere in Russia. I could not learn during my visit in July and August that this first stroke at the poor defenceless wretches in the Glebovskaya Podvoryeh brought any definite consciousness of approaching mischief to the better protected classes of Moscow Jews. As the progressive blows were struck, they found each grade in the Hebraic social formation quite taken by surprise—quite unprepared by the misfortunes of a poorer class for its own calamity. To this day there are numbers of Jewish merchants of the First Guild in the large Russian cities who will not believe it possible that the Russian Government—though it has broken its faith with everybody else—can ever turn against them.

Moreover, the Jewish community in Moscow was almost completely lacking in organisation. We habitually think of the Israelitish element in every town as being so closely welded together in bonds of common interest, sympathy, and ambition that it overbears and breaks down the scattering competition of outsiders. This notion is more or less at fault in every civilised country. It is not true even of Moscow.

On the Bourse there, for example, I found Jewish merchants of the First Guild who had lived in Moscow for a dozen years or more, yet who barely knew each other by sight, and in two cases, I remember, not even by name. The explanation is that, under Dolgoroukoff's lenient

rule, their race and religious barriers had fallen away, and they had formed associations with Christians instead. They came, too, from different parts of the empire or of Europe; their children in many cases were baptised, and they avoided intimate Jewish connections on their account. The Jewish community in Moscow spent 125,000 roubles annually in charity, but the sum was contributed by a very small number of individuals. During the terrible spring and summer of 1891 only 27,000 roubles could be raised among them for relief of the sufferers, railway tickets, &c. This must not be put down to niggardliness. On May 10 the *Novoe Vremya* declared there were 65,000,000 roubles' worth of bills on Moscow Jews in banks or in private hands which no one would accept or pay.

All the same, this midnight descent on the Jewish quarter sent a thrill through the whole body. It could not be believed that the thing was done with authority, and protests and appeals were filed, as if there was still a reign of reason and justice.

The merchants of the First Guild were not long suffered, however, to remain under this delusion. I have already explained how, under the law that each merchant might "take with himself" into the interior as many Jewish clerks as he needed, it became a not uncommon thing for artisans and small traders to settle in towns, nominally as clerks of some big Jewish merchants, but really

doing business for themselves. I do not think there was much of this in Moscow. Indeed, the old Governor-General, Prince Dolgoroukoff, interpreted the word "need" so literally that he never granted permission to a Jewish merchant to employ a new Jewish clerk without referring the question whether it was "needful" to M. Naidianoff, President of the Bourse Committee, who ever since 1885 had invariably answered no. This, by the way, furnishes an interesting comment upon the stories of Dolgoroukoff's subserviency to the Jews.

But now of a sudden the Moscow officials discovered a new construction of the phrase "may take with himself." They began an investigating tour of the offices and counting-rooms of the Jewish merchants of the First Guild. Every clerk who could not prove that his employer had personally conducted him from his home in the Pale to his present place of labour, was given abrupt orders to get out. Many of the men thus put under sentence of banishment or ruin—for what could clerks do in the Pale?—had lived in Moscow more than half their lives, and were well-known and popular citizens. One old clerk in the Moscow-Riazan Bank, thus expelled with his family, had held his place and his residence in Moscow for thirty-two years!

For some weeks the police kept up a system of midnight descents upon the various podvories, not only in the Zariadie quarter, but elsewhere, as

in Solianka, Staraia, and Ploschtchad streets. This running fire of irregular persecution, however, touching only the poorest classes as it did, was merely an overture to the real performance.

The first two days of the Passover, in April of 1891, will never be forgotten while the Jews remember Russia.

It is said to be to the felicitous invention of M. Alexeieff, Mayor of Moscow, that these days owe their sinister renown. I saw that burly, swart, round-headed, heavy-jowled barbarian driving in his *troika* with Admiral Gervais, and he did not look as if he had ever invented anything. He is a man of forty-five, and inherited great wealth and a large mercantile business from his father. The Jews lay stress upon the fact that his mother was a Greek—of a race which they hold in peculiar terror and aversion. He is an ambitious demagogue, who ostentatiously divides the Mayor's salary of 7000 roubles among the clerks in the office, and himself spends from 100,000 to 120,000 roubles in entertainments and municipal ceremonies annually. The year 1891 is said to have cost him 160,000, owing to his bringing all the officers of the French fleet from Cronstadt to Moscow, entertaining them at the principal hotel four days, and sending them back as they came, by special train, all at his own expense.

The fact that the old Governor-General had steadfastly resented this spread-eagleism, and done all he could to prevent the Mayor from posing as

the master of Moscow, furnished Alexeieff's chief reason for joining the conspiracy against Prince Dolgoroukoff. The same motive changed him from an effusive, not to say loud-mouthed, defender of the Jews in Alexander II.'s reign into the most vehement and relentless Jew baiter to be found anywhere in the dominions of Alexander III.

He burned to distinguish himself at the very outset of the Grand Duke Serge's régime by a more ingenious device of torture for Jews than had yet occurred to any other anti-Semite. The Levantine half of him prompted this peculiarly Oriental piece of brutal cunning.

An imperial edict had finally been secured a few days before, which swept away all the rights of residence in Moscow given by the law of 1865 to Jewish artisans and handicraftsmen. This decree was in the hands of the Moscow authorities some time before the Passover. It was Alexeieff's idea to withhold it for a little and have some sport.

On the first day of the Passover, after the Jews had assembled in their synagogue, whispered word was passed round of a ukase just promulgated which would hereafter make it difficult for more Hebrews to come and settle in Moscow. Later comers brought the text of this decree. It was but a line or so, ordaining, in substance, that "all Jewish artisans, small traders, publicans &c., are forbidden to enter Moscow and the

Province of Moscow." It was dated March 28 (O.S.).

It is true that this came as a surprise, but the Jews gathered together in celebration of the paschal sacrifice did not, perhaps, regard it as an unmixed evil. Under the circumstances, with a hostile spirit plainly gaining force at St. Petersburg, and with the memory of the previous week's midnight arrests in their minds, it was natural that they should feel that there were already quite enough Jews in Moscow.

The next day, the second of the Passover, came what seemed at first to be another edict. It also bore date of March 28 (O.S.), and it said simply: "The Minister of the Interior, in connection with His Imperial Highness the Governor-General of Moscow, will straightway consider and adopt measures to secure the removal of the 'above-named Jews' from Moscow and the Province of Moscow."

"Above-named Jews"? The puzzled community gazed at the words in bewilderment. Then a terrible light shone upon the paper. The two decrees were really parts of one edict. Yes! They bore the same date! The phrase "above-named," in the second, could only refer to the category enumerated in the first. They had been separated, and doled out on different days, in a refinement of savage cruelty. The laws of 1865 were annulled!

A shriek of dismay went up, drowning the

chant of the festival. Women swarmed screaming through the narrow streets to the synagogue. In thousands of homes parents looked at each other over the heads of their children with blanched faces—and, even as they gazed, heard the hoofs of the Cossacks' horses on the stones outside.

CHAPTER XII

MARINA ROSTSCHA AND THE "CIRCULARS"

A DOZEN years ago a birch forest came up almost to the very gates of Moscow along the city's northern line. It was called Marina Rostscha, and this name was given to the residential suburb which, shortly after the war, began to extend itself beyond the municipal border. The first to discover this northern outlet were well-to-do citizens—everywhere in Russia as in the United States on the look-out for rural spots in which to build summer cottages—and their comfortable wooden villas now line the main road for some miles beyond the city limit. The forest has dwindled here into scattered groves of small trees, through the verdure of which may be discerned still other and more secluded rustic summer houses.

In a remote part of this straggling wood some Russian speculators of the humbler sort eight years ago built a village of little houses—they might even better be called hovels—and rented them to Jews who were too poor to pay police blackmail for the privilege of living in Moscow itself. At the Passover time of 1891 it is said

that 400 Hebrew families were huddled in this squalid hamlet. They were perhaps the most hopelessly poverty-stricken creatures in the whole province, but they at least had homes of their own—that peculiarly racial ambition which everywhere, under the most adverse and trying conditions, the Jewish people toil to gratify.

Like the very poor in every community, these households hidden away in the forest were rich in children. The families here were to be computed, I was informed, at the high average of six members each.

I made a pilgrimage to this now historic place on a rainy day in August of 1891. Three Greek cemeteries lie upon this northern border of the town—the largest of them just within the city bounds, the others outside. After you have passed these burial-grounds Marina Rostscha begins, but there is a long drive through a comparatively open district before our part of the woods is reached.

No more depressing spectacle can well be conceived. The white-stemmed birches, which lend an indescribably sad aspect to all North Russian scenery, drooped their delicate boughs like weeping willows and shuddered in the rain. The pale green masses of distant foliage lost their outlines in the gloomy grey mist exhaled by the drenched earth. Little disused lanes, all deep mud and puddles, here and there branched from the chief thoroughfare to pierce the bosky thicket, and

where these cut a way through the trees the eye caught vistas of rude roadside shanties, which had once been homes, and now were but a forlorn and ugly part of the picture of desolation.

Somewhere in this rain-soaked and deserted wilderness I was told there were a dozen or more families of Jews still living in their cabins. I could not find them. We drove in and out for what seemed to be several miles without seeing a soul. In one of the lanes, finally, we came upon two Jews, an old, long-bearded man in cap and caftan, and a young fellow who looked to be in an advanced stage of consumption, dragging through the deep mire a truck laden with household goods. Some time before a big and rather foolish-looking vagrant dog had attached himself to us, and was following along after my droschky. The two Jews left their cart as we approached and withdrew to a safe distance until we had passed. My *isvostchik* laughed till the tears ran down his face as he explained to me, by pantomime and the few German words he knew, how the Jews were always in mortal terror of dogs. Volumes could not have better told the tale of a hunted race.

The story of the clearing of Marina Rostscha is perhaps the most cruel and repellent episode in the whole record of that spring's barbarities.

As I have said, the Jews living here were of the lowliest class—artisans, petty traders, and street hawkers, porters, and day labourers. They

had congregated here, it is true, to avoid the police, but this involves no suggestion of wrong-doing on their part. Their object in getting as far away as possible from the police, was not that they were criminals, but that they could not raise the money to pay them for permission to live unmolested in the town. There is no record of an arrest ever having been made among the Jews of Marina Rostscha for a criminal offence. The heads of families—all the men, in fact—went daily to Moscow to work, returning in the evening to their homes. Some of their children came in to the technical or handcraft school maintained by the Jewish community of Moscow. Most of them, however, studied their primers and elementary books at home.

Of a sudden, without warning, on an inclement wintry night, a troop of police and Cossacks surrounded this out-of-the-way country suburb, and, forming an engirdling cordon, proceeded to carry out Prince Golitzyn's written order to expel the entire community!

This order was executed with what even Russians regarded as incredible brutality. The lights had been extinguished in almost every house, and the unsuspecting people were asleep. They were awakened by the crash of their doors being broken open, and the boisterous entrance of Cossacks, with torches and drawn swords. The terrified inmates were routed out, and driven with blows and curses into the night,

without being given time even to dress. They snatched such garments as they could and ran. The tales that are told are too harrowing to dwell upon. At least 300 families were thus dragged from their beds, and chased out into the wintry darkness on this first night's raid. Barefooted, half-naked, frightened out of their senses, these outcasts wandered helplessly through the black woods, moaning in their misery, or raising shouts in the effort to keep together.

Some of them, at last, were able to build fires in the forest, and gather around these the old and infirm, and the women with nursing babes at their breasts, or little children, who had made their way thus far with bare feet over the snow and frozen ground. The soldiers pursued them hither and stamped out these fires!

Others did not stop in their flight until they had reached the cemeteries, lying just outside the town. Here they found refuge, and, crouching for shelter among the tombstones, waited for morning. Here, when the mocking daylight came, it gilded pictures of anguish and horror which one may not attempt to describe. Take only this one little sketch from the panorama of suffering: it is the figure of a woman—by name Epstein—who, fleeing from her invaded home through the night, became separated from her husband and son, and made her way alone to the Miuski Orthodox cemetery. She is found by the morning light, lying insensible on the frosted

grass among the graves. Beside her is a dead child, to which she had given birth during the dreadful night.

No allusion to this amazing event has ever appeared in any Russian paper. There was no editor who dared so much as to mention it. Although many deaths resulted, directly and indirectly, from the terrible shock and exposure of that night, there were no inquests, no investigations, no official reports.

News of the outrage did spread through Russia, by letters and by word of mouth, and some of the details found their way into the foreign press. Even the Russians were shocked, or at least annoyed, by the gratuitous savagery of the thing. In July M. Pobiedonostseff, speaking to Mr. Arnold White on the subject, said everybody deplored the violence shown by the "late" Chief of Police in the Marina Rostscha evictions. This characteristic lie implied that the Chief of Police had either died or been removed. Neither was the case. The Cossack Yourkoffsky, who came to Moscow from the Kouban, whip in hand, an illiterate, uncivilised, menial police bully, and who worked his way up to mastery by dint of sheer brute cheek, was Chief of Police then, and continued to be until the beginning of this present year 1892, when he was superseded for complicity in a scheme of plunder, by forgery and embezzlement, which was on too magnificent a scale for even Russia to pass unnoticed. That

his loss of office and disgrace had nothing to do with the Jewish question, is evident from the fact that his successor, Vlassoffsky, is an even more celebrated Jew baiter, and won his promotion by excelling all previous records of harsh brutality, in the clearance at Riga. It was he who confiscated 12,000 roubles belonging to a Jewish charitable society (although it had a ministerial permit), on the ground that its relief books contained no Christian names. This same Vlassoffsky it was who, wearied of the trouble of arresting the Jews of Riga in their houses, authorised their seizure on the streets, and gave five roubles reward to a *gorodovoi*, who, on bringing a prisoner in, said he knew he was a Jew by his nose.

The raid through the forest was continued next day, and for the following week, to find the scattered and isolated houses which had been neglected on the first descent. The refugees were given three days in which to sell all their goods and get out of the province. From this condition to absolute spoliation was but a step. At these "sales," out in the woods, chairs were sold for a penny apiece; beds went for sixpence. No one obtained money enough to buy a railway ticket to the Pale. The reign of terror lasted until all but some dozen or fifteen families of the whole 400 had been driven from their homes. Then an English lady, resident in Moscow, was able by intercession with her bosom friend, the wife

of one of the Moscow officials, to secure a respite for the miserable remnant. These are the people whom I looked for and was unable to find last year. I am told that they, too, have gone now.

I have dwelt at length upon the barbarities of Marina Rostscha, because there they were exhibited on a circumscribed stage, and can be grasped in something like their entirety. It is hopeless to give an equally complete notion of what happened in the big city of Moscow simultaneously. All that can be said is that there were many hundreds of similar domiciliary descents, alike by day and by night, and that hundreds of families were as ruthlessly turned out on the streets as any of the sufferers in the forest suburb. The stories of individual affliction could be given here by scores. One distracted Jewish girl, an eighteen-year-old seamstress, named Malka Usilevna Chasgorine, who had come to Moscow from the village of Gradiansk, in Mohilef, being chased from her lodgings and refused food or refuge because she was a Jewess, threw herself into the river. She was rescued by a moujik, and kindly Christians made up a purse to enable her to leave town. There were two perfectly authenticated cases of young Jewish girls of respectable families and unblemished character, who adopted the desperate device of registering themselves as prostitutes, in order to be allowed to remain with their aged parents in the city where they were born!

Many instances could be cited where whole families for weeks feared to sleep at night in their own homes, but walked about in the suburbs until morning, or, worse still, took refuge in the bagnios and "bath-houses" which are the resort to Moscow's vilest elements—and were, in consequence, safe from police interference.

For this new crusade spared no one. Though the head of the family possessed the qualifications necessary for residence, it was now held that this did not extend to his children who were grown up. The police were the sole judges as to whether they were grown up or not.

As to that, the police were the sole judges of everything. They sent out many people who had a perfect legal right to remain. Mr. Friedland, a civil engineer, and Miss Seldowicz, a certificated physician, were both protected, nominally, by their professional degrees. That mattered nothing at all. The former, indeed, appealed to Yourkoffsky, and was ordered to leave within ten hours on penalty of being sent by *étape*.

In dozens of other towns in Central Russia—Kaluga, Tula, Ribinsk, Podolsk, and the like—clearances marked by the same brutality and the same savage disregard for law or decency went on in this Easter week. All over the empire the Jewish communities trembled at the startling news each day brought them, and looked to a tragic morrow for themselves.

In St. Petersburg General Grœsser filled all the

railway stations with police, to detect and arrest travellers suspected of being fugitive Jews from Moscow and the interior. At the same time he issued an order under which most of the Jews living in the capital were to leave by May 3.

Suddenly it was announced that the expulsions had ceased. The first statement to this effect was officially suggested to the correspondent in St. Petersburg on May 5. The next day some of the inspired journals contained hints that the whole anti-Jewish policy would probably be abandoned.

Nobody seems to have guessed for the moment what this apparent abrupt *volte face* meant. In some quarters it was even supposed that Russia had seen the folly and inhumanity of its course, and repented.

In a couple of days, however, strong light was thrown upon this puzzling enigma by the announcement that Baron Alphonse de Rothschild, the head of the Paris house, had decided to withdraw from that Russian loan of 600,000,000f. which was supposed to have been settled the previous month.* It turns out now that he notified the Russian Ministry of Finance of this decision on May 2. The ensuing declarations, that the Jewish expulsions had ceased, and were not to begin again, had no grain of truth whatever. They represented merely the Russian officials' desire to throw dust in the keen eyes of

* See p. 185.

the Rothschilds, and lure them and the other great Jewish houses into going on with the loan. Even after the reported failure of the loan, and the consequent tumble of Russian securities on the Bourses, the St. Petersburg papers, and the Russian Embassies in various Continental capitals, kept alive the false report that the Rothschilds had not really declined, and that the loan was only delayed, not lost.

When this pretence could no longer be maintained, disguise was abandoned swiftly enough. On May 11 the *Novoe Vremya* launched a bitter and half-crazy attack against the Rothschilds, insinuating that their adoption of the Jewish pretext was a mere blind to cover their insolvency, and demanding immediate vengeance upon all the Jews in Russia. The *Grashdanin* and other anti-Semitic papers joined the hue and cry at full yelp. The Moscow *Gazette*, in this fierce delirium of passion, invented the remarkable theory that the Jews were polygamists, and urged that the police should forthwith take over custody of the Hebrew marriage rolls kept by the rabbis in the synagogues.

The persecution, despite official hints and statements, had never stopped at all. It may well be that the Finance Minister, Vishnegradsky, tried to stop it, at least until the loan was realised. There is no doubt whatever of his intense disgust at seeing the Rothschilds and Bleichroders driven away from his bait just at the critical moment by

the hair-brained fanatics and knaves in control. He was, and is, by no means alone in this disgust. I talked with many Russian merchants and men of affairs on this subject. They rarely expressed concern about the sufferings of the Jews. They were unanimous in deploring the stupidity which had precipitated their sufferings before the loan had been actually secured.

On May 17, the Grand Duke Serge made his formal entry into Moscow. At his side was his wife, the pale and sad-faced Hessian Princess. who is a granddaughter of the English Queen, and who had only recently been dragooned into pretending conversion to the Greek Orthodox Church. Nothing could be at once more pathetic and more revolting than the true story of that "conversion." The marriage, so called, took place in 1884. Very soon thereafter those circles in Germany and England which first catch gossip as it filters down from royalty itself, began to be stirred by strange rumours of a terrible nature concerning the bride's unhappiness. It was not long before the Princess left her unspeakable husband, revealing to her relatives as her justification a story of his infamy which cannot be suggested in print. These relatives, or some of them, persuaded her to reconsider her action. Pressure was exerted from the highest quarters in St. Petersburg, and in more than one other great capital, and the Princess Elizabeth finally with reluctance returned. It is universally alleged and believed in Russia

that two of Serge's favourites, his chaplain and his intendant, Count Stenbock-Fermer, worked upon the credulity of this virgin wife by assuring her that her husband's neglect was due solely to her religious heresy, and that everything would be changed if she accepted the Orthodox faith. When she at last consented, there were special references made in sermons and Church papers to the certainty that the saints would now bless her with children.

The Jews of Moscow saw this couple—the half-witted and obscene Prince and the Princess who had protested to John of Cronstadt and to her relatives against the mockery of her "conversion"—ride in state through the Holy City to the Iverskaya Chasovnia, and prostrate themselves under the Ikon of the Iberian Mother of God before entering the Kremlin. Conceive the bitterness of the reflection in the minds of these Jews—that it was avowedly to purify Moscow for this pair that they and their children were being torn from their homes and sent to wander as outcasts over the face of the earth!

A fortnight later the Czar himself came to Moscow with his wife and family, on their way to the Crimea. A Jewish veteran named Israel Deyel, a corporal in the reserves, had written a most pathetic petition* that at least the Hebrew soldiers who had served their time might be allowed to remain in the city of their birth. It is

* See Appendix A.

known that the Czar actually saw this petition. It is known also that Deyel was sent to prison, and that the expulsions now proceeded more fiercely than ever.

Up to the 23rd of July 1891, when the funds of the Moscow committee had become exhausted, nearly 27,000 roubles had been expended and 2365 railway tickets purchased. As children travel free, this latter figure by no means measures even the assisted part of the exodus. If we put the children for whose elders tickets were bought at the low number of 635, it would give us 3000 people who needed assistance to get out of the town. The committee estimated that about one in four of the Jews quitting Moscow had to apply for help. This would raise the number of refugees, from March up to the latter part of July 1891, to 12,000. Doubtless that estimate closely approximates the truth.

I have described with some minuteness the classes which made up these first 12,000 exiles. There was a sprinkling of well-to-do people among them, but the vast majority were artisans, managers of small workshops, and others to whom this sudden enforced expulsion meant ruin.

To be compelled thus without preparation all at once to sell everything and get out—and that in a hostile town where no Christian would pay the debts he owed a Jew or buy his goods for more than the merest pittance—did literally involve ruin. A case came under my personal observa-

tion—that of a Hebrew joiner, some of whose excellent work I saw in the house of a friend—a hard-working, temperate man, who had been living by his trade in Moscow for twenty years. He had a large family and practically no savings. The few roubles he had put by went through May and June to keep the police quiet. In July, when he could pay no more backsheesh, he was brusquely given ten days in which to leave. His household effects were worth perhaps $100. He was able to sell them for $4. I speak of my own knowledge, because I saw the man quit Moscow with his family and saw my friend help buy the tickets through one of his clerks. He did not dare go to the station himself.

But up to the time of my visit to Moscow the more prosperous of the artisan class were still clinging to the hope that if they could only raise money enough for the police they might manage to remain. The Passover edict, it will be remembered, had only instructed the authorities of Moscow to "consider and adopt measures for their removal." That left a broad margin for bribery.

While I was in Moscow came the regulations of July 28, 1891. They bore this date, but they were not then officially promulgated. A week later their provisions were only a matter of hearsay, and copies were vaguely known to be in the hands of certain Jews.

The first three clauses dealt with the Jewish

artisan class, whose rights had been suspended in April. This new edict put an end to their hopes of buying further delay. They were now divided into three categories—(1) those living in Moscow only three years, unmarried or childless, and employing only one workman; (2) those of six years' residence, with four children and four workmen; (3) those having "a very long residence," a "large family," and more than four workmen. For these classes expulsion was decreed on this sliding scale: Within (1) from three to six months; (2) from six to nine months; (3) from nine months to one year.

Of course, this provision of a minimum and maximum time was solely for the benefit of the police. It may be imagined how they peddled out the extra time, by months, then weeks, then days!

This was bad enough, but its rigours had been largely discounted. Two-thirds of the people at whom it was aimed had already fled. There was, however, in the tail of these "regulations" of July 28 a sharp and unexpected sting. It was in these words:

"All those who have been living in Moscow by virtue of possession of Circular No. 30 of the Minister of Interior (Markoff) of 1880 are divided into two categories:

"A. All clerks, personal attendants, and those of small occupations must go within six months.

"B. All engaged in trade, especially in large

factories owned by Russians, must go within one year."

I was on the Bourse at noon one day when the first whisper that the "circulars" had been suspended was sent the rounds of the floor. A strange, motley, picturesque crowd is that which gathers on the Moscow Exchange—with sleek, well-clad city merchants and bankers rubbing shoulders against uncouth capitalists from the Volga, the Crimea, or far-off Archangel; with Tartar traders from remote Siberia and the Chinese border; with olive-skinned, doll-faced Persians; with bright-eyed, hawk-visaged Bokhara Jews; with Armenians, Cossacks, Finns, Poles, Greeks, Turks, English, and Germans; above all, with thin, silent, observant, masterful Russian Jews—a weird, cosmopolitan medley of races, of costumes, and of jargons, in which Russian is heard, perhaps, least of all.

I shall never forget how the whispered rumour about the "circulars" ran through this throng. One could trace its progress as it went; men ceased talking quotations and crops, and their faces lost the flush of commercial eagerness; little groups formed apart to discuss it in undertones. A hush fell over the hall. We were in Russia, and no man dared speak aloud about this thing he had heard.

The "circular" class, whose doom was thus announced, was composed of a much higher social grade of Hebrews than had previously been

touched. The phrases "clerks, personal attendants," and "those engaged in trade" hardly convey an idea of the half of those who in Moscow held the circular of 1880. Only a few days before, a professional man of distinction and means had said to me that he could not be molested because he was protected by a Ministerial circular!

He was in London, a homeless wanderer, before many months. He had with him here, as a companion in exile, an intelligent and energetic young man whose firm in Moscow did an annual business of £50,000, but who had not been in trade the requisite number of years to secure the privileges of a merchant of the First Guild, and who was accordingly living under the "circular." The decree of expulsion found him newly married, with a handsome house which he had just fitted up with something like £2000 worth of furniture. He unhesitatingly resolved to leave the country at once, and not haggle with the police about the few extra months he might buy from them. He applied to the railway officials—who are, of course, also Government officials—for a car to transport his furniture to the frontier. They were very sorry, but all their cars were in use, and it might be months before they could let him have one. He learned on inquiry that this was their stereotyped reply to all such applications from Jews. Then he tried to sell his furniture, and encountered another combination against his race

of much the same stamp. No one would bid more than a few hundred roubles; my recollection is that the sum finally offered was £60. Then the young merchant came to a heroic resolve. The last night he was to spend in Moscow—he had sent his wife ahead—he locked himself up in his house with saw and chisel, and by morning he had utterly disfigured and destroyed every stick of his fine furniture. If he could neither keep it nor sell it, at least he provided that no one else should enjoy it.

The "circular" class was supposed to comprise 800 families—a total of 4000 souls. There were a few poor people among them; the bulk were in comfortable circumstances, and some—for the most part manufacturers, brokers, and agents—were what is called wealthy in Russia.

As an indication of this I had a letter from Moscow in October saying that, now the "circular" people were leaving, the scenes at the Smolenski station were of quite a different character from those I witnessed in the summer. Then one was chiefly impressed with the poverty of the poor fugitives being packed into third-class cars. Now, my correspondent said, most of those leaving went in second-class carriages.

Putting aside for a moment the cruelty and wrong done to these people, try to imagine the grave self-injury inflicted by a country which thus blindly chases out a whole great class of merchants, manufacturers, and skilled workmen, who

are everywhere a stimulating and important factor in the commercial life of that country. The "circular" class alone are said to have employed in Moscow and vicinity 25,000 Russian workmen.

There was, indeed, in this edict expelling the "circular" people an obscure phrase excepting from its operation certain "very large factories"—but this in practice covered only four establishments, whose influential Russian owners had Jewish managers whom they desired not to lose. One clause provides that, if Jews of Section B can give the police good reasons, their stay may be extended another year. A gentleman whom I met in Moscow asked a police official if it would be a "good reason" that immediate expulsion would almost entirely ruin him and his family. I made a minute at the time of the reply:

"No," said the official quite good-naturedly, "you must show that *Russians* will be directly injured by your going. Injury to yourself is no reason at all. The Government doesn't care whether you have a shirt to your back or not."

CHAPTER XIII

THE FLIGHT FROM MOSCOW

Of necessity one must study an exodus on the road. I was not fortunate enough anywhere to see the *étape*—that melancholy survival of mediæval brutality of which Mr. Kennan makes so much. But on every side I heard stories of them, and was shown proofs that men and women against whom absolutely nothing but their nationality was alleged had been marched through the streets in chains and in the company of thieves and other criminal refuse.

It was not through lack of looking for one that I failed to see the *étape*. On fully a score of occasions, in various Russian towns, I watched the whole scene at the railway station at the hour when the cheap train was to start westward with its freight of homeless exiles. In Moscow I went almost every afternoon to witness at the Smolenski station the departure of the seven o'clock train for Brest-Litovsk, by which at that time practically all the refugees were making their way to the Pale. What I saw daily at this station remains still most vivid among my recollections of Russia. As a little boy I used to associate our

Civil War entirely with the old wooden depôt of my native town, where I saw troops gathered from time to time to go away, and watched the sobbing or even more cruel dry-eyed anguish of the wives, mothers, and daughters left behind. Those childish impressions—half forgotten for many years—all came back bright and sharply defined at sight of the Jewish fugitives in the Smolenski station.

Most of them were on hand an hour or more before the time for the train to start. The long, broad platform was dotted with piles of their luggage heaped against the walls. The character of this *impedimenta* showed obviously enough that its owners were going for good—spoke eloquently of a people torn up by the roots. There were pet pieces of furniture wrapped in sheets, and crockery encased in bedding and tied with ropes. One saw carpets, picture-frames, candlesticks, big leather-bound books, even bird-cages, all made into parcels as portable as possible, with a few to be taken free as personal baggage. Everywhere there were teapots fastened outside the hand-luggage, so as to be easy of access during the wearisome journey of two nights and a day across to the Pale.

The management of this baggage lay heavily upon the minds of the fugitives. They flitted incessantly about, dragging it from one point to another, as opinions fluctuated among them concerning the probable attitude of the railway

officials toward it. At each platform along the train stood a peasant in uniform whom we would call a brakeman, and his principal task was to see that none of this unauthorised baggage got into the car, where now dozens of people were crowding themselves together on the narrow wooden benches. I watched for a long time the manœuvres of two or three groups of elderly men —thin, flat-chested, long-bearded men in caps and caftans—who stood guard over little heaps of household goods. Every now and again, when the brakeman's attention seemed to be diverted, one of them would dart across the train and try to hand something through the open window to a friend inside. Occasionally he succeeded; more often the guard ran over and forcibly intervened. In this latter case the Jew would go back and keep sharp look-out for a chance to repeat the attempt. Once I saw the brakeman, in his anger, dash a big, rope-bound chest, which they had nearly dragged into the car, to the platform with such violence that it was broken and its contents scattered for yards about. The men who had it in charge meekly got down and gathered them up and fastened the box together again. Then they dragged it to another part of the train, and eventually smuggled it through a window.

The whole pathos of the Jews' position in Russia —their long-suffering abasement, their fawning absence of dignity, their tireless patience,

their curious persistence of daring in little things —was in this picture.

It could not be said that the train hands or any other officials connected with the railway behaved with special roughness to these Jews. Indeed, with the solitary exception I have noted, wherein one could not deeply blame the man, they seemed to be rather amiably disposed than otherwise. This was of interest, as confirming what, over and over again, intelligent and candid Jewish merchants and professional men had told me—viz., that the Russian peasants do not themselves dislike the Jew, and that both the persecution, and the brutal spirit in which it is carried out, proceed entirely from above, filtering down through from the Czar and the Holy Synod, to the lowliest policeman or *tchinovnik* who yearns for promotion and the favour of his superiors.

The trainmen did, however, behave with conspicuous curtness to the three or four long-haired village priests or popes of the Orthodox Church, who were also travelling third-class, and who bothered them with questions or by not having the proper tickets for their luggage. One of these, a quizzical-faced, drunken, and dishevelled fellow, with a patched and muddy gown, and a woman's straw hat perched jauntily on his head, was at last thrown summarily out of a car and went away smiling blandly.

The daily average of Jewish fugitives, during my observations in July and August, seemed to

be about fifteen families. In only one instance did I see any going other than by the third-class or presenting an appearance of prosperity.

All the women, however, were dressed well. It was only too evident that they were wearing their best clothes. At Hamburg I encountered much proof of the existence of a class of female exiles who are in rags and tatters. They did not come from Moscow. These women at the Smolenski station—like most of the Jewesses I saw everywhere throughout Russia—were much less characteristic in type than the men. These latter—pallid, keen-eyed, nervous, bearded, Orientals in face, form, and gesture—could not be mistaken anywhere. But their wives and daughters for the most part looked like the comfortable and ugly Slavo-Saxon peasantry roundabout Leipsic. There were a few exceptions. I saw one little girl, poorly clad save for a thick black satin pelisse much too large for her, staggering along under a big bundle of bedding, who had a face that might have come from a frieze in the Palace of Saigon.

Only here and there did one see a young man among these exiles. The Jewish youth seems to be in the army or already safe beyond the frontier.

As a rule, there was little enough of tears or lamentation. During the four months then drawing to a close, over 10,000 people had come to that Smolenski station with all that

was left of their belongings, had said good-bye to the only people in the world they knew, and had gone forth to strange lands or to the horrors of the Pale. It is small wonder that most of those I saw looked as if they had forgotten how to weep.

One hideous woman of fifty I recall, by the aid of a rough sketch among my notes, who cried a great deal. She was leaving behind her an even uglier son—a repellent-faced young man who was the object of her fondest grief. He was immensely bored by this, and was continually wandering off to talk with a group of menfolk, and being summoned back for fresh maternal kisses. The parting of two young sisters, who clung, sobbing, to each other through the window till the train moved, makes another picture in my memory. The one who was left fainted on the platform as the carriages began gliding by. Most marked feature of all were the prolonged fervent caresses bestowed by those who were remaining upon the little children in the cars. The babes were held up to the windows, and kissed and kissed again by the elders outside, with a depth of emotion which seemed to belong to the chamber of death rather than to a railway station.

To and fro, meanwhile, among these scenes of misery high Russian officials in uniform and well-to-do Russians of private station sauntered unconcernedly, lighting cigarettes and chatting as they strolled, without so much as a sign that they

were aware of the presence of these Jews about them. They positively never looked at them. I was given many quiet and friendly intimations in Russia that it was considered extremely bad form even to observe incidents and occurrences which the authorities were responsible for. If "well-intentioned" Russians see the *étape* coming down the street they look the other way. Despotism must regard this as its ultimate triumph.

On the evening of Thursday, August 6, I visited the Smolenski station for the last time. The scenes that evening attending the departure of the train seemed to reach a climax of harrowing interest. There were more small children than usual, perhaps. The tragedy of it all—the ignominy, the injustice which had darkened these wretched lives before, the cruel doubt and uncertainty of their future—oppressed my spirits. I could not resist the impulse to take off my hat as the long "emigrant" train slowly moved out of the station. It was such a solemn salute as one pays, in Roman Catholic countries, to the passing of a hearse.

At that very moment the glass in the roof overhead rattled with the concussion of cannon reports. Again and again, I know not how many times, the noise of big guns firing not far away shook the air. The explanation was at hand outside. Some mile further west were the grounds of the French Exhibition in Moscow. That evening the Jew-baiting Mayor, Alexeieff, was

giving a banquet there to the visiting officers of the French fleet, who had journeyed from Cronstadt as his guests.

The hapless Jews in that train, as they took their farewell look upon the domes and minarets of the Holy City wherein most of them had been born, may have wondered what the cannon were firing for. The most acridly sarcastic mind among them could have hit upon no more bitter irony than is furnished by the fact that the salutes were being fired in honour of the partnership newly formed between this monstrous and unclean despotism and the French Republic!

From the Smolenski station it is but a short walk up the broad Dolgoroukoffskaya to the chief forwarding prison of Moscow. The high white walls, with their round, castellated towers at the corners, rise abruptly from the side-walk. The prison itself is a red brick building, well inside these walls, with few windows and those heavily barred. It is to this prison that all the Jews arrested on the night of the descent upon the Glebovskaya Podvoryeh were dragged; it is from this that they, and many who came later, have been sent away by *étape*—that is, marched down the public thoroughfare in chains, or under heavy Cossack guard, to the railway station.

Mr. Arnold White, accepting here as elsewhere the assurances that polite Russian officials have made to him over the dinner-table, has taken it upon himself to deny that any Jews were thus

sent unless they were criminals. American officials in Russia have been quoted to me as authorities for this same statement.

A devoted man, to whom the Jews of Russia and of the world owe a greater debt than they can ever repay, and whose name it will be possible to mention when, a few months hence, he has left Russia for good, last autumn collected for me in various towns a list of eighty-eight persons who were marched out of Moscow by *étape*, and against whom no charge of criminal conduct—unless it be criminal for a Jew to shrink from beggary and expatriation—was brought. They were taken publicly through the streets, most of them in chains and all in the enforced company of common jail-birds, at eleven o'clock on Monday mornings. This list was published in the New York *Times* of December 7, 1891,* and subsequently in *Darkest Russia*. No detail of it has been controverted.

The gruesome-looking manacles which figure as a badge upon the cover of this book, and which are now in my possession, were worn out of Moscow on June 1, 1892, by Jossel Revsin, a Jewish artisan who was marched publicly away in a chain gang of criminals and vagabonds, solely because of his race and religion. In the same *étape* was another handcuffed Jew, Israel Rassner, and two Jewesses, Rivka Krein and Feiga Beresinova. The women were not in irons, but they were a part of the *étape*. All four were thus

* See Appendix B.

conveyed into the Pale, whence they eventually emerged and made their way to England and America. Although he did not learn their names, these were the unhappy wretches whom Mr. Romanis, the hard-working and candid correspondent, saw being driven through the streets of Moscow on June 1, and described in the *Daily News* of June 6.

Space will permit only the most cursory glance at the terrible story of Moscow during the year which has elapsed since the Passover decrees. No other city in modern times has offered such a wantonly abhorrent chronicle of evil deeds and cruel instincts to an offended Christendom.

The Grand Duke Serge will not, it is said, complete his second year of office as Governor-General. His brutal manners, his total neglect of his duties, and the now general knowledge of his personal character, have been too much for even Moscow. He finds himself scowled at on the streets, and hissed on the race-course. In consequence, he spends almost all his time out on his estate of Illinskaya, surrounded by the group of favourites whose names are mentioned under one's breath. He pays no attention whatever to the tasks imposed by routine upon a Governor-General. Of these, by far the most important is the hearing of appeals and complaints, and the reception of petitions. Prince Dolgoroukoff used to see every one. Serge sees no one. Of all the hundreds of petitions sent to him, the first has yet to be

acknowledged or answered. To make matters worse, he does not even leave his chief intendant, Istomin, to attend to the Moscow business, but has him half the time at Illinskaya.

This Istomin is another sinister figure in the group which governs Moscow under the favour of the Holy Synod. He is a man of university degree, who, after several failures in life, went to St. Petersburg and was lucky enough to get on the blind side of Pobiedonostseff, who made him editor of his official paper at a salary of 8000 roubles. Working his way carefully, he obtained a pious reputation as a relentless anti-Semite and a capable man of affairs, and was picked out as bear leader and general manager to Serge, when that simpleton was selected for Moscow. The Jews of the "Holy City" regard Istomin as their real grand inquisitor.

Of the scores of domestic tragedies over which this man has been proud to preside, perhaps this is the most characteristic. It happened on October 23, 1891. A woman, the wife of a small merchant belonging to that division of the "circular" class ordered to leave by October 26, was so close to her time of confinement that removal threatened her life. Her husband, with a physician, haunted the approaches to the Governor-General's office for two days, before they could find any one in. At last they managed to secure an interview with Istomin. The physician explained to him that they asked for a fortnight's respite for the woman

simply because if she started now upon a railway journey it was practically inevitable that a catastrophe would occur on the road.

Istomin replied that there could be no respite and that the woman must go at once. He added: "There is no reason why you should not take a separate compartment for her on the train and let a midwife travel with her."

And that was what was done!

Another narrative, dealing with people much better known and illustrating in a broader way the whole heartless business of crushing and ruining a family, has for its central figure Mrs. Mandelstamm, a venerable lady of refinement and culture, the mother of the well-known Dr. Mandelstamm of Kazan. Upon the death of her husband, in 1874, she went to Moscow to live. Her elder children were already domiciled there, and the younger ones were now given the advantage of the best educational facilities afforded by the Holy City. In the commercial disasters following the war Mrs. Mandelstamm's property became involved, and her oldest daughter, Mrs. W——, now a middle-aged woman with four children, was compelled to work as a saleswoman in a *Magasin* to help support the family. This did not prevent their household continuing to enjoy the respect of the entire community, and the fact that Dr. Mandelstamm of Kazan is a baptised Jew, and a man of high professional and popular position, was looked upon as guaranteeing them immunity from

the persecution. Suddenly, under the "circular" decree, the aged widow received warning to leave Moscow within four weeks. Her son went to the palace, and personally saw Istomin, with whom he was acquainted. Istomin promised readily to submit the case to the Governor-General, volunteering the assurance that His Highness was not such a barbarian as to refuse this good old lady the privilege of living and dying among her children in Moscow. A few days later Dr. Mandelstamm called again upon Istomin, and that official without a word returned to him the petition he had submitted. On it was written, in Serge's own hand, the incredible order that instead of the four weeks granted her by the police, the venerable woman must leave Moscow within twenty-four hours!

During this brief space of time, the decrepit old widow made all her arrangements for leaving her home for ever, and started on her journey. But first she witnessed the hurried marriage of her third daughter, Rosetta, to a young fellow-student at the University, named Weinburg. This marriage was to have been deferred for a year or two—until both bride and groom had taken their degrees. It had now to be precipitated in this summary fashion, in order to prevent the expulsion of Rosetta as well.

This visitation of barbaric wrath upon an unoffending family was not even now exhausted. The eldest daughter, Mrs. W——, was ordered to

leave Moscow by April 26, 1892, a decree which she by a few weeks forestalled. After years of self-denying labour to support and educate her children—labour which has broken down her health and induced a pulmonary affection which can give her only a few more years of life—she is driven from her native land, a homeless and helpless outcast, with three daughters, the eldest of whom was studying the piano at the Conservatory, the youngest of whom is a child of ten. Her only son came of age this year, and has been drafted into the Russian army—to be expelled and follow the others into exile when he has served his term with the colours.

This truly mediæval catalogue of vicious barbarities is only one, and by no means the most cruel, of the bitter many which have been burned into the memories of the Moscow Jews. After July of this year 1892, there will remain scarcely a shadow of that Hebrew community which eighteen months ago numbered nearly 30,000 souls. The rabbis, the beadles, the members of the choir, the elders, have all been driven out. Even the sexton of the Jewish burying-ground has been sent away. No Jewish butchers remain. From the beginning, special care was taken to trace and expel all Jewesses who were employed in Hebrew households as cooks, a decision having been obtained that they were not artisans, and some one else having decided, or being said to have decided, that they were not domestic servants.

The expulsions of January 26, 1892, upon which date expired the time limit of the poorer class of "circular Jews," and of those artisans who had "six years' residence and four children, or employed four workmen," may be said to have reached a climax in horror which no one had dreamed possible. To the brutality of man was added now the awful savagery of the elements. The week was the coldest which even that arctic region remembered for years. On the day itself, the thermometer actually marked 34 degrees below zero, Fahrenheit. The gas could not burn in the street-lamps in such a temperature; great bonfires were kept blazing in the squares and at corners, at public expense, to prevent citizens compelled to be out of doors from freezing as they walked; the schools were closed, and garrison drills suspended. On the 22nd, orders were issued that the forwarding of criminal convicts from the central prison should be stopped for the time being, owing to the terrible cold.

It was at such a time as this that nearly 2000 Jews were forced to take a last look at what had been their homes, and start off on their pilgrimage of exile. The weather was too bad for convicts to travel in; it was all right for people whose offence was having been born in Israel. Not until two days after the date of the expulsion—that is to say, until practically all the victims had departed—was the clemency which had from the first been extended to thieves and murderers

stretched out to cover Hebrews as well. A police order was issued on January 28, deferring "the further expulsion of Jews from Moscow until February 1, in view of the extreme frosts." Mme. Novikoff might characteristically reproduce this decree as an example of the humane spirit inspiring the Russian Government. When it was pointed out to the officials that the expulsions had already taken place, they shrugged their shoulders and laughed.

One shudders at that laugh. That four little children were frozen to death in the streets, on their way to the railway station, is a mere incident of the hideous story. An educated young Jewish woman who was in Moscow that day, and has since joined her brother in London, grows faint and hysterical and blinded with tears when, even at this distance and lapse of time, she essays to tell the narrative of what she saw. I do not wonder at it. There were scores of wretched children, clad only in linen smocks or tattered summer clothing, whose hands and feet were frozen. The crowded platform, from early morning till midnight, offered at every step such scenes of heart-breaking misery of mind and wild physical anguish as belong to the battle-field alone.

With this final picture haunting the memory, let us leave inhuman Holy Moscow.

CHAPTER XIV

ST. PETERSBURG, ODESSA, AND KIEFF

St. Petersburg is less characteristically Russian than any other city within the empire. It is a kind of fakir in architecture—a cosmopolitan charlatan borrowing styles and tricks of expression from numerous civilised sources, yet revealing its innate barbarism through them all. I have not seen it in the winter, when it is said to present a brilliant and attractive individuality entirely its own. Its summer aspect is one of profound melancholy, with vast sprawling empty streets, with huge gloomy deserted edifices, with waterways confined between silent quays, and bearing on their cold surface no signs of trade activity or social animation.

The far-famed St. Isaac's Cathedral suggests in turn St. Paul's in London and the Capitol at Washington; the Kazan Cathedral is a poor imitation of St. Peter's at Rome; the great building devoted to the General Staff is copied from Versailles; the palaces are plagiarisms from Venice, Amsterdam, and Berlin; even the shop-windows follow at a respectful distance after Parisian models.

In this city, built to order over a swamp by a Czar's caprice, and ever since its creation the centre and focus of the efforts of an alien imperial line to Germanise Russia, what may be called municipal feeling scarcely exists. It is dominated by the congregated bureaucracy of the empire even more wholly than Washington is ruled by Congress. Its population comes and goes, without rooting itself or forming enduring associations —like that of the capital on the Potomac. The signs on its principal and fashionable business streets exhibit German names, French names, Dutch, Swedish, Finnish, and English names, with only here and there a Russian appellation.

The residents of St. Petersburg know and care so little about such civic facts and conditions as lie outside their own special ambitions or points of social contact, that it has been extremely difficult to collect statistics concerning the Jews of the capital. None of the people whom I met and talked with there had any definite notions on the subject. Most of them were under the impression that, with a few favoured exceptions, the whole Hebrew community had been cleared out years ago. This idea was borne out by my failure, during nearly a fortnight in St. Petersburg —on the streets, in the bazaars, at the garden theatres in the suburbs—to see more than one or two distinctively Jewish faces.

I learned afterwards that there were still a good many Israelites in St. Petersburg, but that they

went about as little as possible, and particularly avoided places of public resort. One evening at the Arcadia Gardens I called my companion's attention to a young man walking with a girl who seemed to be his sister, and asked if they did not look like Jews. "The girl may be," was the reply. "If she is a registered prostitute nobody will object to her as a Jewess. But the man would only dare come here in case he had been baptised: otherwise he would certainly be insulted and compelled to go!"

The best clue to the figures of the persecution in St. Petersburg is furnished by the mortuary statistics of the city. In 1882 there were 480 Jewish deaths recorded; in 1890 the number had fallen to 200. Assuming the death-rate to be 25 in the thousand, this would give us a Hebrew population of 19,200 in 1882 and of only 8000 in 1890. That is to say, in nine years 11,200 people had fled or been expelled from the city of the imperial residence.

The figures for the following year, or a portion of it, are more exact. I discover that the St. Petersburg Jewish Committee from June 13 to October 22, 1891, assisted 202 artisan families of 569 souls to leave the city. This does not include any of the refugees who were able to pay their own expenses. It also leaves out all the young men, no matter how indigent. The committee did not dare help them to get away for fear of incurring the charge of facilitating their escape

from the conscription. From two independent sources the estimate is made that the whole number of expulsions from May to November was close upon 2000. They have been going on at this rate ever since.

All this has been done without the warrant of any edict or decree of expulsion. The Chief of Police, General Grœsser, who frankly declared that he was above the law, acted entirely on his own initiative. If any one tried to appeal to a higher authority, he was simply put out within twenty-four hours. The most common pretext for these expulsions—where any was vouchsafed at all—was that the victims did not work at their trades on Saturdays. But, as has been explained heretofore, no explanation or authority is necessary. General Grœsser, so long as he did not incur the wrath of the Czar or offend the Czar's master, the dread Pobiedonostseff, freely did anything under the sun in St. Petersburg that he pleased.

When the savage expulsion decree fell upon Moscow and the towns in the Province of Moscow at Passover time in April 1891, Grœsser filled the eastern and southern railway stations of St. Petersburg with police and Cossacks to intercept any of the persecuted race who might try to escape in that direction from their doom of returning to the Pale. Scores of travellers were arrested on arrival upon the vaguest and most shadowy suspicion of being Jews, and in not a few instances were detained in custody for days,

though their passports showed the suspicion to be groundless. It is said that some of these people, out of sheer official perversity, were afterwards marched off by *étape*.

In Russia no man can exist without a passport. When the police take this passport away he is no longer alive in any civic sense. Every privilege appertaining to his human estate is suspended. He can appeal to no one. If it is the whim of some choleric barbarian in epaulets to send him to Siberia, off he must go, with no more chance of escape or redress than a captured fish flapping in the sportsman's basket. Even if he be a stranger, with the passport of a foreign Government, he is equally powerless. Only last November Mr. Joseph Pennell had his passport taken from him at Berdichef, and was refused permission to either telegraph or write to the British Consulate at Kieff or the American Legation at St. Petersburg. It eventually pleased the provincial authorities to transport him to the western frontier. If they had decided to send him eastward instead, he would simply have disappeared into Siberia without a sign.

The expulsions in St. Petersburg, which since 1882 had never wholly ceased, began again with renewed virulence in May 1891. The most notable victim was the young poet Frug, who came from the south to the capital in 1883. Although he had been refused admission to the university, his literary attainments won prompt

recognition, and his writings, alike in verse and prose, were sought after by the most important Russian journals, including some that were avowedly anti-Semitic. Despite this fact, he would not have been allowed to live in St. Petersburg or anywhere else in Russia outside the Pale, had not the device been adopted of enrolling him as a footman in the household of Mr. Warschoffsky, a Jewish lawyer having the right to employ one co-religionist as a servant. Only in November last even this humiliating privilege was arbitrarily withdrawn, and Frug was ordered to leave the city within twenty-four hours, on penalty of being sent by *étape*. There was no pretence that his writings were objectionable, or that he had committed any offence. It was only that he was a Jew.

Can a country be regarded as civilised, or as fit to hold friendly relations with civilised peoples, of which such a story as that can be truthfully told?

It would serve no purpose to quote the details of the St. Petersburg expulsions. Mr. I. Rabbinovitch was sent in chains to Dünaburg for no offence save that of being a Jew. Moses Mordonchai Feinberg, a gold and silver smith, whose right of residence dated from 1871, and Eidel Solomon Gissing, whose permit extended back to 1868, were both reduced almost to beggary by summary and wholly unjustifiable orders to leave. So the list might be extended indefinitely.

When, in the summer of 1891, the *Times* printed the statement that a synagogue in St. Petersburg had been closed by the Government, the Russian press at once denied its truth, and the denial was accepted. The facts are that two synagogues, not one, were shut up: they were in the province of St. Petersburg, not the city of that name. One was at Narva, a manufacturing town, where Jews work in the cloth and flax mills and the chemical works. The other was at Kolpino, where they are employed in the great naval factory, founded by Peter the Great, where engines are now made and armour-plate is rolled. These Jews are said to be without exception veterans whose service of twenty-five years under Nicholas and Alexander II entitled them to live anywhere in Russia. It was not thought expedient to abrogate this privilege. The Government instead closed their synagogues. It is a penal offence to publicly read Jewish prayers save in a licensed synagogue. Thus these old soldiers, against whom no thought of offence or disloyalty was charged, were estopped from worshipping God in the manner of their fathers.

These wanton things were not done in some remote and inaccessible corner of the empire, by officials beyond the control of the Central Government. They happened within the Province of St. Petersburg, under the direct authority of its Governor, the Czar's friend, Count Toll.

The childlike foolishness of it all is, I am aware,

well-nigh incredible. The outside world can comprehend neither its gratuitous malignity nor its spasmodic want of system. Why suppress the synagogues of Narva and Kolpino, and leave others unmolested? Why pack one man off in chains, without a word of warning, and let another remain months after his time has expired? Why expel the poet within twenty-four hours, and take no steps whatever against the brothel-keeper? Why toil to fill volume after volume with a conflicting jumble of statutes, and then act without any warrant of law at all? There is no answer. One might as well ask why the same horse which shies at a piece of paper on the road will charge a field battery without a qualm.

One of the least explicable of the late General Grœsser's acts was his issuing an order forbidding Jews to apprentice their children to artisans, in order that they may learn a trade. What on earth the reason may be for this astonishing regulation, its results have been painful in the extreme. Not even the veterans of Nicholas have been exempted from this whimsical order. One old soldier, Minin by name, some years ago apprenticed his son to an umbrella-maker. The boy served his time, obtained his certificate as a skilled workman, and began work for his master as a journeyman for the period stipulated in his indentures, living in his house meanwhile. Under this new edict the police declared this contract of his illegal (though it bore Grœsser's signature) and

ordered the young man to quit work. Minin petitioned Grœsser and was rebuffed; then he appealed to the Senate, whereupon Grœsser gave both him and his son twenty-four hours in which to leave St. Petersburg.

Another favourite device for harrying the unhappy people, now highly valued in large Russian towns, is ascribed to General Grœsser's ingenuity. By police orders, every Jewish merchant must hang out a sign, giving not the Hebrew names of himself and his father, but those names as it pleases the Russian wit to contemptuously parody them. Thus a man whose name is Samuel son of Abraham, must on his sign describe himself as Schmoulke son of Abramke—names which fill the Russian Jew with loathing. This serves numerous purposes: Jewish shops can be systematically boycotted; in case of a riot the Christian mob can see exactly where to work its violence; and the owners are compelled by their own advertisements to make themselves ridiculous in the eyes of the community.

Jewish merchants of the First Guild, residing elsewhere in Russia, cannot visit the capital now without liability to insult and expulsion. Though they have as much legal right in St. Petersburg as the Czar himself, the police pay domiciliary visits to their hotels and order them to get out of the city immediately.

It is reported that on a recent occasion, when Russia was casting about for a new loan, a great

foreign banking-house was requested to send a confidential agent to St. Petersburg to consult with the Minister of Finance. The agent who was sent was a Hebrew, a financier of high standing and social position. Although it was known that he came on Government business, the police went to his hotel and so affronted and browbeat him that he turned about and went home again, and negotiations for the loan ceased then and there.

Incidents of this sort illustrate afresh the fallacy of the popular notion that the Russians are an astute people. They are smart in a small savage way, like a Sioux Indian on a Soudanese sheik. It is a cunning which falls so wide of our own standards of cleverness that we instinctively exaggerate it. An episode in Mr. Pennell's Berdichef experiences last November affords an excellent example of what I mean. An official representative of the Governor-General, sent down from Kieff to discover what this suspicious stranger was doing, went with him to a local photographer's to have developed all the film-negatives Mr. Pennell's kodak had made. There were street scenes, market groups, itinerant pedlers, pictures of tumble-down old rookeries, and the like. The official looked gravely through them, one by one, over the lamp in the dark room, doubtless deeply puzzled that any sane man should so waste time and chemicals. When the inspection was finished, only one negative had been laid aside for confis-

cation. By merest chance this one had in it the upper part of a telegraph pole. The *aide-de-camp* detected in this a subtle attempt to obtain information about Russia's military telegraph system, and had it destroyed on the spot.

It is not surprising that the official policy of suppression and exasperation which I have outlined above should have well-nigh destroyed business in St. Petersburg. Competent men of affairs, who are concerned in the Russian trade, assure me that the existing commercial collapse is even more due to the demoralisation created by the Jewish expulsions than to the bad harvest. In the first week of October 1891 alone, ten big Orthodox Christian business houses in Moscow failed, their aggregate liabilities being nearly £1,000,000. To this inaugural crash succeeded a winter of unparalleled financial stringency, punctuated by bankruptcy, and the spring of the present year, so far from promising improvement, brought the fall of the great Günzburg banking-house, attended by a whole train of minor failures. Just as the Czar had the Jewish flour mills closed on account of the crucifixion, so he is understood to have personally interposed to prevent official aid being extended to save the Günzburgs from disaster. It would be strange indeed if commercial confidence throve in such an atmosphere.

An even worse state of affairs exists at Odessa, where the stagnation which I saw last summer was during the autumn turned into a destructive

panic by the ukases blocking all cereal exportation. Of that great congregation of prosperous merchants who have built up the Black Sea trade and developed far above all other portions of the empire the grain belts of the Dnieper and the Dniester, hardly any can hope to emerge unscathed, and the majority are confronted by absolute ruin.

On the surface of things this is ascribable, of course, to the terrible failure of the crops and to the ukases mentioned above. In reality one of the chief factors in Odessa's present tribulation is the enforced idleness or absence of the small Jewish middlemen, who formerly went through the grain country buying the crops as they stood and advancing the money for the harvesting expenses. Last year, from fear of confiscation or expulsion before they could sell again, and also from their inability to get credit at the banks, they made no purchases. As a result, in whole rich districts the crops were never cut at all, but rotted where they stood.

The Jewish exodus from Odessa has lacked the sensational features we have seen displayed at Moscow and St. Petersburg—for the reason that the Hebrew community there was much stronger and richer than in any other Russian city, and could purchase civil treatment from the police and provincial authorities—but in point of numbers it must nearly if not quite equal that from both the others put together. It could hardly

be otherwise, when in the year 1890 the city contained 106,000 of them.

A large proportion of the Israelites in Odessa at the beginning of 1891 were foreigners, who had come from Austria, Roumania, Germany, Turkey, and elsewhere. Among them were some of the leading citizens of the town—lawyers, physicians with rich, fashionable practice, dentists, merchants, ship-owners, and manufacturers. They have all had to go.

Although Odessa is within the Pale, that fact has made very little difference with the unhappy Jews of Russian birth domiciled there. Odessa is a new city. Its amazing growth and splendid commercial position during the past twenty years have been largely the work of the Hebrews from other parts of Russia who moved thither in the sixties and seventies, under Alexander II's relatively enlightened rule. There Judaism held up its head as it never dared do in Moscow or St. Petersburg. There it maintained handsome synagogues, had its open share in municipal management, and stood on an admitted footing with other sections of the community. No Jew in Odessa hesitated to avow his race or talk about it. There were next to no converts to Christianity there.

Even in August of 1891, when I visited Odessa, the situation had gravely altered. The banks were avoiding transactions with Jewish merchants as much as possible, and in a country where

everything is arranged upon a credit system that in itself was ruinous. The forced realisations of those who had had to fly, and the general refusal of debtors to pay what they owed to those who remained, were completing the spoliation of the Hebrew community.

I saw them by scores, sitting about in the parks, gardens, and public places of Odessa, or wandering aimlessly along the beautiful parade which, perched high in the air, overlooks the blue Euxine. Their inability to look as if they were accustomed to leisure was pathetic. "Compulsory idleness" was written on every lineament of their thin, eager, olive-hued faces. You could read it in the sidelong glances they bent upon strangers passing by and in the restless manner in which they sat on the benches, as if ready to spring up and run on the instant.

Six months before they had been active, capable, self-reliant citizens, busily carrying on their share in the commerce of a bustling and prosperous port, maintaining comfortable homes, educating their children, and bearing themselves with a decent pride. They had been powerful enough, when the Governor-General issued an order authorising the police to punish Jews who failed to touch their caps to all officials, to compel the revocation of the order by simply refusing to enter any place of public resort so long as it was in force. Now the blight of barbarism had passed over them and turned them into the

distraught, frightened, and wretched beings I saw.

"Holy" Kieff to-day probably exceeds Odessa in population, although it plays so insignificant a part in the thoughts of the outside world. In appearance it is as uniquely striking as "Holy" Moscow, but in character they are widely separated. Kieff and the district to which it gives its name really belonged to Old Poland. There is a large Catholic element in the city. Many ancient families of the Polish nobility hold big estates in the country roundabout—or did until within the last few years. For generations cruel Russian laws have existed for the purpose of breaking up these estates and preventing the children of the Polish owners from inheriting them, but until recently the officials were bribed to let them remain a dead letter. With the rise to power of Pobiedonostseff this parleying with the heretics came to an end. A little later Count Alexis Ignatieff, a younger brother of "The Infamous," was sent to Kieff as Governor-General.

This junior Ignatieff is a fat, rough, burly soldier of fifty. He is worth remembering, because many people in Russian official circles regard him as the coming man. Eight years ago he was Chief of Staff of the Cossack Guard. When the *circonscription militaire* of Irkutsk was formed in 1884, he was put at the head of it. His Siberian record is one of the most terrible

which even that home of horrors presents. He had men flogged to death and female prisoners tortured until even Russian journals protested. Then he was promoted to the rich and powerful berth of Kieff.

With the coming of this hard barbarian a new impulse was given to the spoliation of the Polish proprietors, the coercion of the university students (an exceptionally restive lot in Kieff), and the persecution of the Catholics, the Molokani, the Stundists, and other "schismatics" of the South.

It may be imagined that he has not spared the Jews.

No figures whatever are obtainable on the subject of his expulsions. The province of Kieff, as distinct from the city, is inside the Pale, and last year was estimated to contain some 400,000 Hebrews. On the theory of ratio heretofore adopted, this would mean that 60,000 people had been chased from their homes in the villages into the towns. There are no means of testing this estimate. But to see the present state of Berdichef, the principal town in the province, is to feel ready to credit any statement on this head, no matter how wild.

This Berdichef was in 1890 supposed to contain some 60,000 inhabitants, two-thirds Jews. It was then an overcrowded place, made up for the most part of old and insanitary rookeries, in which were huddled one of the poorest populations to be found anywhere in Europe. By

August, 1891, it was said that fully 20,000 additional Hebrews had been driven in from the surrounding country. The spectacle of their poverty and squalor was something too sickening for words. The whole place, with its filthy streets, its open sewers, its reeking half-cellars under the overhanging balconies, and its swarming throngs of unwashed, unkempt wretches packed into the narrow thoroughfares on the look-out for food, made a picture scarcely human. Mr. Pennell tells me that when he was there in November he was assured that, instead of the 60,000 Jews of August, there were then in Berdichef no less than 90,000.

It is understood that there is nothing else in the Pale quite so awful as the condition of Berdichef. Certainly the fugitives who find their way out of Russia from this point touch the lowest depth of destitution and enfeebled misery which the committees at Hamburg and elsewhere have to encounter. But there are over a hundred towns in that hell called the Pale where the same causes operate which have made Berdichef such an unspeakable charnel-house, and in each one the Russian police have done their brutal best to reproduce the conditions of Berdichef.

The "Holy" City of Kieff has always occupied a position in Russian law apart from the province of that name. The separation dates back into the mists of the Middle Ages. Kief is invested with unique importance in the Russian Orthodox

mind. Here it was that the pagan descendants of Rurik first accepted Christianity; here St. Vladimir, seventh in descent from Rurik, built the first Christian church in 989; and here he lies buried in the Dessiatinnaya church, which occupies the site of his ancient edifice. When Poland and the Czar Alexis in 1657 divided the Ukraine between them the city of Kieff was excepted from the provision which gave the right bank of the Dnieper to the Poles. Thus the "Jerusalem of Russia," as it is called, came under the dominion of the Czars 136 years before the province lying outside its walls. This was not gathered in by the Muscovite octopus till the second partition—that of 1793.

Among the distinctions in law still maintained between the city and the province is this, that the latter is in the Pale and the former is not. For generations no Jews were permitted to live in the Holy City. The statute is still on the books forbidding any but merchants of the First Guild to reside in the town, and limiting them to the Libedsky and Plossky quarters. Side by side with this are other laws referring to other classes of Jews who live in the town. Prince Demidoff San Donato, in his admirable work, deals at length with the grotesque paradox involved in these contradictory enactments. Of course, what they meant, though he did not like to say so, was that the local officials had the Jews of Kieff at their mercy, and could blackmail them at will.

This is what is still going on in the "Holy" City. Judging by a study of the laws, I had expected to find no Jews at all in Kieff. To my surprise, they were vastly more in evidence there than in Moscow. The outburst of anti-Semitic fanaticism which had smitten Moscow, St. Petersburg, and Odessa hip and thigh, which had made the fair at Nijni Novgorod a blank failure, and established a reign of terror in every manufacturing and trade centre of the empire, was being used in "Holy" Kieff with strictly commercial prudence. They were not so silly in this sacred city as to slay the goose of the golden eggs, or even chase it away prematurely. A sagacious system of squeezing, with just enough brutality to make the pressure acute, commended itself instead to their judgment.

A favourite trick there, at the time of my visit, was to serve well-to-do Hebrew merchants with notice that their cooks or their coachmen, not being artisans, must leave the city. If the merchant cared to go to the necessary expense, he could convince the police authorities that his special servants were undoubtedly artisans. If he concluded, on the other hand, to let them go, he presently received a notification that his own position in the city seemed irregular. That meant business. Knowing perfectly well that they had laws enough, in assorted varieties, to make anything under the sun irregular, he walked up to the Captain's office and settled.

To this day we get from time to time news of a fresh raid upon unauthorised Jews in Kieff. In December, for example, there was the story that 150 public-houses kept by Jews had been closed in that city. Most probably it was a lie made out of whole cloth; if it was not, then it showed the continued existence in Kieff of a great class of Jews who, by the law, should have been expelled long before, and who had at last come to the end of their power to pay blackmail.

It is an ingenious part of the scheme at Kieff to every now and again make some savage and sporadic onslaught upon a group of Jews, solely with a view to leading the St. Petersburg authorities to believe that the expulsions are being earnestly and thoroughly carried on. Quite of this character was the order of the Governor-General last summer summarily expelling all the singers, musicians, and actors of Jewish blood in the various theatres and cafés-chantants of the city. It happened that this involved the closing of every such place of entertainment in Kief. On the very night of the order "Robert le Diable" had to be abandoned at the Opera-house and the audience sent away, because the conductor of the orchestra was the only non-Hebrew connected with the performance. Naturally, an incident of this sort attracted universal attention. Tidings of it flew to St. Petersburg, and pleased Pobiedonostseff and the Czar. This served the purpose of diverting attention from those other

Jews who had not been sent out of Kieff, and who were paying through the nose for their immunity.

So this long chronicle of the persecution comes to an end. From the mass of notes still untouched concerning Nijni Novgorod, Kaluga, Simbirsk, Tula, Pavlovo, Vorsina, and numerous other places, examples of barbaric cruelty and heart-breaking misery could be cited to an almost indefinite extent. They would but repeat the story already told. Nor is it needful to refer to the savage anti-Jewish riots at Staradoub, Balta, and other points throughout the south during the past winter; they are still a part of the current news, and in truth relate more to the general famine-stricken and turbulent condition of the empire than to the special Semitic question.

In the interest of a complete narrative of the expulsions, it is necessary to now leave the land of oppression and to observe the phenomena of the exodus presented at and across the frontier.

CHAPTER XV

ISRAEL IN EXILE

THE indignant interest with which Christendom has followed Russia's career of internal persecution and inhumanity is, at its best, of a sentimental character. However shocked the nations may have been, none of them has allowed the feeling to affect in any tangible way its friendly relations with the Government of the Czar. But the moment public gaze is shifted from the doings inside the Empire to the great streams of fugitives pouring across the border, humanitarian sympathy takes on sternly practical limitations. We have already witnessed the beginnings of what threatens to be a policy of complete exclusion on the part of the German Empire. Both England and America display a growing nervousness over the prospect of a sustained Semitic invasion, and are not only applying such immigration regulations as they possess with more and more severity, but are quite in the mood to further strengthen their defensive statutory machinery. There is no other nation north of the equator, big or little, which does not occupy practically this same hostile attitude.

It would be misleading, however, to ignore the

gradations in which this self-protective spirit is evoked and manifested. The United States, for example, have room enough for all new-comers who promise to be good citizens and helpful members of the community. Their interest is concentrated upon the inquiry whether the Russo-Jewish refugees come within this category. In a modified sense, this is true of England as well, although her reliance is placed upon the volunteer vigilance of the London Jewish Board of Guardians and Russo-Jewish Committee rather than upon the lax and meagre safeguards of British immigration laws.

But the two great Empires governed from Berlin and Vienna ask a very different question. They are already overcrowded and overburdened. There is not work enough now within their borders to keep in even relative comfort their own people. The utmost skill of their rulers is taxed to prevent vast war budgets from bankrupting the nation, and to repress the tendency of ill-paid or idle millions to revolt against their lot. To either of these great States the influx of any mass of poor people, seeking food and employment, would be a grave calamity—and this would be as true of Gentiles as of Jews.

The problem with which this whole Russo-Jewish question confronts the German and Austrian Empires is one which, in its ultimate working out, may profoundly affect the history of Europe.

We have seen that Russia's action is twofold.

She drives all the foreign-born Jews out of her dominions. She roughly sweeps up all her native-born Jews and dumps them into the hundred or more towns of the Pale. That she should expel the aliens is, from her point of view, intelligible. But what earthly reason can there be for this strange policy of herding all her own Jews in the towns of these fifteen western provinces, where, in incredible squalor and helpless misery, they must eat each other or force their escape? What conceivable commercial, social, or political end can be served by this course? Is it merely the fantastic stupidity of barbarism? Or is there deep method beneath the madness?

Both in Austria and in Germany this massing of the unhappy Jews in the towns of the Pale is suspected to be a war measure of a unique and terrible character. When at last the great conflict comes, it is believed to be Russia's scheme to drive westward before her armies this whole Jewish population, making of it a moving *chevaux-de-frise* of flesh and blood, which the hosts of the Triple Alliance must cut through and dispose of before they can strike a blow at the advancing enemy.

Even if this hideous device proves impracticable, and the first shock of combat is on Russian soil, the conditions will not be much altered. The Jews, congregated in the towns along the whole frontier, will not less effectively serve as a barrier between the Russians and the invader.

It is enough, however, to have suggested this phase of the complicated subject. If there were no other reasons, it would sufficiently explain both the eagerness with which the authorities and the local Jewish communities of the German and Austrian border stations concert to pass all the refugees on as swiftly as possible to the west, and the sudden interest which the Prussian military authorities have taken in sharpening their watch upon the eastern frontier line.

The exodus has had six principal outlets. Of two of these—the departures by vessels from the Baltic ports, and from Odessa to the far south *viâ* Constantinople—little need be said. The former was never important. The latter has ceased to be so since Turkey was won over by Russia and France, and induced to close her frontier gates. There was a time when the solution of this great problem seemed to lie in the direction of Syria and Egypt, but the hopeless impracticability of dealing with the Turk, and the indisposition of the Jews themselves to go back into their worn-out Oriental cocoon, combined to dispel this idea. Of the four land routes, by far the most used is that which, traversing Northern Russia and Old Poland by Dünaburg and Wilna, enters East Prussia at Eydtkuhnen. The central section of the Pale and the district along the line from Moscow to Brest-Litowski sends its refugees through Warsaw to cross the frontier of the Vistula at Thorn.

The southern Pale and the whole section beyond Kieff and Odessa is drained primarily by the railway which crosses the Austrian frontier at Podvolochesk, and to a lesser degree by the line which enters Roumania at Ungheni.

With the partial exception of those travelling by this last-mentioned route, the fugitives all make their way toward Hamburg.

One of the unfortunate consequences of this eagerness on the frontier, of which mention has been made, to at all hazards keep the exodus moving, is that very little inquiry is made there as to the fitness of the people for emigration. They are sent on to Berlin and Hamburg, where the local committees must bear the responsibility of detaining and sending back the worthless ones, and of deciding what the others are good for and where they are to go.

The scenes at the frontier stations are no less touching and significant than those of the original embarkation. I have told how the exiles were packed like sprats in the third-class cars, with their wooden seats and fetid atmosphere. By the time they have reached the frontier—a journey of from twenty to sixty hours it may be—weariness, scant food and sleep, and the sense of friendless desolation have induced an air of half-stupefied dejection. They sit in silence, gazing at nothing, with lack-lustre eyes which seem to say again, "Sufferance is the badge of all our tribe."

Mechanically, too, they obey the train officials who at the Russian terminus order them out of the cars. The men drag out the big hempen bags and boxes which they have had with them, and cluster about the baggage vans to watch for the appearance of their other chattels. The women and children huddle together on the platform, looking with furtive fright upon the strange new scene. At last all are passed through the station building and emerge at the other side upon another platform, where an empty train is drawn up. On these carriages are painted German words; the trainmen wear a novel uniform and have their trousers outside their boot-legs.

Then a curious thing happens. There are Russian soldiers, with a non-commissioned officer, stationed at every carriage door. Each male Jew must now show his passport bearing the police stamp of permission to leave the Empire, and explicitly stating the size and *personnel* of his family. He has had to spend money, and sometimes weeks of time, to secure this permission. If now there is any informality about it, or if the examining sergeant or gendarme chooses to suspect one, the Jew is roughly put to one side, perhaps to be detained at the local prison, perhaps to be sent back to the hole whence he was fleeing. At last all those who have a right to leave Russia have been got into the new train. It starts—and in five or ten minutes has passed the frontier.

On the German border this train goes unac-

companied by Russian officials. They used in earlier Bismarckian days to cross over upon German soil, and even swagger about the German Custom-house. A peremptory stop has been put to that, and along the whole extended Prussian frontier the Muscovites are now kept sharply in their place, and made to feel that they have neither friends nor well-wishers on the other side of the line. But on the Austrian and Roumanian frontiers they still assert, and are patiently conceded, the privilege of following the refugees into non-Russian territory, and standing by the while their baggage is opened and examined by the Customs officials.

A day and a night elapse before the slow train reaches Berlin: still another day and night are consumed in the journey to Hamburg. This will be the first German city they have seen, for they are not allowed to enter Berlin, but are conveyed around the outskirts of the capital by the Ring-bahn to Ruhleben, and thence, after an hour's inspection and rest, sent westward.

The Jewish committee at Berlin, formed in June 1891 to receive and forward these exiles, has performed a humane and arduous task. Under its direction have been the various frontier committees—or *Sichtungskomitees* *—who are supposed to winnow the whole mass as it emerges from Russia, send back the undeserving, tabulate

* See Appendix C.

the remainder, and furnish Berlin and Hamburg with the necessary information. I say "supposed," because in practice this labour has been left to Hamburg. At the frontier and at Berlin the principal work has been in furnishing food and medicine, providing tickets for the penniless and arranging the transportation so that the resources of Hamburg may not be overtaxed at any one time. At Ruhleben some members of the committee are present whenever one of these Jewish refugee trains arrives. Every emigrant is given a cup of sweetened tea and a roll of *kosher* bread upon coming out of the carriage—the children getting milk instead of tea. On their departure—generally an hour or so later—each is given a bowl of pea-soup and more bread. A physician is also constantly in attendance. Much the same benevolence has previously been extended by the *Sichtungskomité* at Eydtkuhnen. These frontier committees also do succeed in detecting and stopping a large proportion of the Jews from Poland proper who try to smuggle themselves through as sufferers from the Pale beyond.

Pathetic stories were told me in Berlin of the terror and ignorance of the earlier refugees, who came shortly after the fierce Passover persecutions. The committee had arranged with the railroad authorities for the use of a disused tunnel in which to feed and examine the exiles during their halt at Ruhleben. The panic-stricken

wretches could with difficulty be brought to comprehend that at last they were among friends. They were afraid to eat the food set before them for fear it was not *kosher;* they fought against giving up their tickets, to be exchanged for others; especially were they terrified at being compelled to enter the tunnel, which seemed to them like another Russian prison. Some were found who, at sight of this, suspected that they had been brought to Siberia instead of Germany. One woman, rather than go into the tunnel, snatched up her two babes, and, screaming as she ran, leaped upon the track before an advancing train, and was rescued at great risk and by a veritable hair's-breadth. The people who come now are more tranquil, but still difficult to manage often enough.

But Hamburg is the real place in which to study the exodus. If I should seem to speak with an excess of warmth upon this subject, let me record in advance the feeling that I have never in my life witnessed more genuine, unostentatious, and intelligent philanthropy than I saw at work here, and have never come into contact with better, kindlier, more truly admirable men than the Jews of the Hamburg committee.

Israel has always been an integral influential element in this fine old *freie Stadt.* In Hamburg there has never been the vaguest dream of a Judenhetze. When the anti-Semitic craze was at its height in Berlin, Dr. Stœcker came to Ham-

burg to lecture. His audience pelted him off the platform, and he had to leave the town that same night. The Jews in the Republic of Hamburg number 20,000, or only 4 per cent. of the population. They constitute 10 per cent. of the membership of the Burgerschaft or Legislature, and furnish 20 per cent. of the graduates in the *Gymnasia* and other higher schools.

The old saying that "every country has the sort of Jews it deserves" passes a just eulogium upon Hamburg. In this proud, strong, broad-minded, free city, where there has so long been one law and one code of courtesy for all races and creeds, the Hebrew community is a source of honour and of strength. It is more than ordinarily prosperous, devout without bigotry, and public-spirited in the highest degree.

The Hamburg committee embraces some scores of the foremost Hebrews in finance, commerce, and the professions. There are no honorary members, no drones. They all give personal attention to the work, and the division of this labour among the various sub-committees forms a piece of mechanism as exact and efficient as a Prussian regiment.

One of the most significant features of their work is the cordial assistance it has from the police and Stadt authorities. The two co-operate as if they were parts of a single body. Several of the buildings, including the men's bathhouse, used by the committee are the property of the

city, and with the exception of one for which rent is paid, have been lent free of charge.

From the moment when the refugees land in one of the four Eastern stations of Hamburg, till the anchor is weighed on the vessel which is to bear them to a new continent, they are under the charge of the committee, and, if needful, are comfortably maintained at its expense.

After their reception at the station, the tickets given them at the frontier are examined, or new ones given them, and records made of all the names, and other particulars. They are then allotted to certain lodging-houses, with which contracts have been made. A complete bath is obligatory, and during this their clothes are disinfected. Such as need new garments—a very large majority—are supplied from the committee's warehouse. Besides the food at the lodging-houses, a generous midday meal is furnished at the Jewish soup kitchen. Small *Sichtungskomites* sit nightly, and pass upon every individual case of the thousands presented. Such help as is necessary is extended, and the applicant is sent to the point where his trade or previous work seems to give him the best chance of success. Generally from ten days to a fortnight elapse before he departs for his new home. Even on the voyage he is surrounded by the care of the Hamburg committee. There are stores of *kosher* meat and bread on the ship, and a Jewish kitchen, a *Schaumer*, and a doctor.

A volume would scarcely exhaust the curious sights which I came upon during my visits to Hamburg, and with which the hospitable town has been familiar since the spring of 1891.

The bath for the men—a public establishment on Bauerstrasse lent by the city—presented most whimsical spectacles. The men all received tickets for four baths—the first compulsory. One of the committee confessed with a rueful smile that the remaining three were not invariably used. It was evident enough that many of the poor devils had never been immersed in water before; none of them had the remotest idea of swimming. They hung back as long as they could, quaked their way in gingerly, and emerged from the tepid water gasping and shivering from fright. I was told that the women both needed and dreaded this ordeal even more than the men.

A whole floor of a big old building off the Alter Steinweg is devoted to the collection of clothing—cast-off or shop-worn—with which the rags from Russia are replaced. Here were great heaps of coats and trousers, still in their original shelf creases, contributed from remnants of stock by Jewish merchants, and other piles of garments collected from houses all over North Germany and Denmark. There were barrels full of hats, huge mounds of boots, some new, mostly old, and tables covered with underclothing, shirts, collars, and neckties. Many of these were elaborate and

expensive productions, which had simply gone out of fashion, so when a Jewish mender of umbrellas turns up at New York in a fancifully embroidered dress shirt he need not necessarily be suspected of bad faith. The committee-men who were with me had great laughter over a dress-coat which some kindly soul had contributed. I suggested that it might be useful for a waiter. But it seems there are no Jewish waiters.

A curtained screen across the big room shut off the part devoted to clothing for women. Here the pegs were laden with frocks of all sizes and colours, with flaring decorations and wildly gay patterns—relics of departed German fashions. I was curious to know whether, if one of the applicants fastened her heart upon some particular gown, she got it, or was put off with something else. "Oh, yes," was the reply; "we give her what she wants. Even Jewish women, you know, must be humoured on the dress question."

The mute record of many tears and saddened homes lay on a table in the corner—a heap of delicately made infants' clothes which had never been worn. I saw two peasant women from some unspeakable slum or other in the Pale look at these wee garments of lace and ribbons, and then look sadly at each other. They understood the language of the little unused robes.

Most curious and droll were the metamorphoses effected in these clothing rooms. Grave, gaunt-eyed, bearded old men came out with jaunty white straw hats and the roundabout jackets of the dandies of 1884. A small boy, whose parents were the very lowliest I saw in face and demeanour and dress, got a costly sailor suit, much better than the German Emperor's children wear. One thick-nosed, bold-faced young man, who had been clothed afresh, came to us with a complaint that his hat did not correspond in quality with the rest of his outfit. It was rather a questionable hat, but his manner displeased my friends. "Do you want to pass, then, for a Baron in America?" one of them asked him.

The public dinner at 12.30 was spread in a room capable of seating about 130. In the three weeks preceding my first visit, in July, 5000 meals had been served here. There were a half-dozen members of the committee here each day, superintending the affair. When the thick pea-broth had been handed about, two of these committeemen stepped forward with bowls and tasted it. Then, as by a signal, the hungry people hastened to eat. They had been waiting for this proof that the soup was prepared in *kosher* fashion.

The virulent orthodoxy of these refugees, if I may so call it without offence, considerably complicates the task of looking after them in their

journey across Europe. They would rather not eat at all than bite into any unsanctified morsel. The very dishes in this soup kitchen which the committee had started for their benefit, had to be new. The *Schaumer*—a venerable, long-bearded dignitary of the synagogue, something between a beadle and a sexton, who presided in a black skull-cap over the arrangements—had to give them repeated assurances on this point. His presence was a formal guarantee that everything had been cooked according to the Jewish ritual.

The bread was all in small rolls, each of which had pasted upon the crust a little paper *kosher* label. In an adjoining room were barrels of peas, of flour, and of sugar. I noted with curiosity that these were all of the most expensive variety. The prices in the books showed this, and it was true of the other articles of food as well. Besides the soup and bread, each person had one-third of a pound of meat, with potatoes and greens.

There was no drink but water, of which they drank tumblerfuls in quite the American way. I commented upon this, saying that the costliness of every other item forbade the theory that this was for economy's sake, but, pointing out that English paupers, or, for that matter, French and German too, would get something besides water to drink, even if their food was of the cheapest and worst. "These people would not drink anything but water," was the reply. "We tried some

of the older and more feeble of them with beer at the outset, but it made them sick, and they begged off from having any more."

In this cookshop 14,128 meals were given during the month of July 1891, 23,579 in August, 13,682 in September, and 5676 in October. The falling off is ascribable in large measure to the rigorous religious fast-days of the early autumn, which rendered the Jews unwilling to travel or indulge in real meals. The greatest number of meals served on any one day was 1360 on August 4. The daily average for the entire period from the formation of the committee through to the beginning of winter was 530. Thus far in the year 1892 the average has been somewhat smaller, owing to the partial closing of the German frontier and the cholera outbreak.

I have not been able to secure exact figures from Hamburg concerning the exodus. In round numbers, about 75,000 refugees seem to have passed through that port since the 1st of June 1891. The committee reports having entirely provided for, alike in food, clothes, transportation, and some small start in life, 20,000 people. They have partially helped 30,000 more. Something like another 25,000 have come to Hamburg and gone away without asking for help or applying to the committee—and very possibly the number may be still larger.

In the matter of finance, the German Central

Committee has raised, including all sources of contribution, something over £100,000. There are objections to examining in detail the expenditure of this sum, and it moreover by no means covers the heavy individual outlay, to which almost the entire Hebrew community has been subjected. The Hamburg committee's books, for example, showed last autumn that they had received £27,000 from the General Committee, and had raised £11,000 more on their own account in Hamburg in addition. This fell, however, far short of representing what had been expended in that city alone upon the ceaseless stream of fugitives passing through. Several of the more important local committees have also been given permission to draw upon Baron Hirsch for current expenses, when their funds from other sources were exhausted for the time being. Hamburg, for instance, was last winter authorised to draw upon him, if needful, to the extent of £20,000.

The most valuable indication of the extent of the new exodus, and of its curious fluctuations, is afforded by the following figures, for which I am indebted to the courtesy of members of the Russo-Jewish committee at Berlin. They give by weeks the number of adult Hebrew emigrants received at Ruhleben and forwarded to Hamburg —the diminution during October being due to the fast-day observance already alluded to:

Week ending—		Week ending—	
July 10, 1891	2,517	January 2, 1892	943
July 17	2,796	January 9	820
July 24	3,452	January 16	695
August 1	2,675	January 23	693
August 8	2,700	January 30	741
August 15	1,812	February 6	776
August 22	2,700	February 13	894
August 29	2,912	February 20	1,010
September 5	3,019	February 27	641
September 12	3,690	March 5	560
September 19	3,355	March 12	602
September 26	2,200	March 19	798
October 3	1,207	March 26	652
October 10	795	April 2	264
October 17	632	April 9	66
October 24	749	To 23	42
October 31	686	April 30	481
November 7	1,526	May 7	754
November 14	1,507	May 14	1,154
November 21	1,437	May 21	1,581
November 28	1,234	To 31	1,563
December 5	1,075		
December 12	1,364	Total, 47 weeks	63,861
December 19	1,023		
December 26	1,068		

These figures take no account of children. Adding these, at the lowest estimate, would more than double the total given above. It is also quite within bounds to assume that, of the total number of Jews fleeing from Russia, not more than two-thirds pass through Berlin. Still further, no record is presented here of the considerable number of refugees who have been able to bear their own expenses, and have not troubled the

committee. Some authorities estimate this class at one-fourth of the whole. It seems to me safer to call it one-fifth. Upon that basis we have then a total flight of approximately 205,000 souls in nine months. By the lowest estimate, the year ending in October of 1892 will have seen not less than 225,000 human beings driven from their homes, and the land of their birth.

It does not fall within the scheme of this work to trace the exodus beyond the converging point of Hamburg, whence it radiates again to every quarter of the globe. Years must elapse before judgment can be passed upon this new Israel out of bondage. The stupendous plan of Baron Hirsch, evolved by the wisdom of the chief men of the race, and endowed by his vast donation, is not yet fairly in operation, and can at best benefit but a fraction of this great host already dispossessed and expatriated. The minor colonies in the United States, founded partly from his bounty, partly by the philanthropic efforts of American Hebrews, have not thus far progressed beyond the experimental stage. The English-speaking communities all over the world—accustomed alike, whether in the huge human hives on the Thames and the Hudson, or the more open spaces of Australia, the Cape, California and Canada, to offer refuge to the oppressed and wretched of whatever race and tongue—hold the

bulk of this prodigious foreign mass still undigested, unassimilated.

Those who are not prone to broadly hopeful views of humanity may without much trouble find warrant for both present discomfort and future apprehension in the character and dimensions of this latest invasion. Doubtless nothing that could be said here would ease the one or allay the other. But I trust that at least some service will have been done by the attempt to examine both the religious and the racial causes underlying this phenomenon of nineteenth-century history, and to become acquainted with the forces which, having been employed for generations to plunder, narrow, debase and demoralise the unhappy Russian Jew, expend themselves now in the final act of throwing him out, a penniless and helpless wastrel, for others to take care of.

The study has in the nature of things been one of sustained gloom—a picture in which the only lights fall from the torches of Cossacks on their midnight raids, or from the sinister candles burning in front of the modern Torquemada's *ikons*. The story of a whole people being insulted, degraded, and abused by system, denied the commonest of human rights by law, and at last stripped bare, torn from their homes and driven out of their country, could not well be made pleasant reading. Yet, now that it has been told, I find myself wondering whether the most pathetic and hope-

less feature is not, after all, its disclosure of what the Russians themselves are like. The woe-begone outcast in cap and caftan, wandering forth dismayed into exile, will take heart again. His children's children may shape a nation's finance, or give law to a literature, or sway a Parliament. At the least, they will be abreast of their fellows ; they will be a living part of their generation ; they will be free men, fearing neither famine nor the knout.

The Russian marches the other way.

APPENDICES

A.

PETITION presented in Moscow, in May 1891, to the Czar by Israel Deyel, a corporal in the Veteran Reserve, and for the writing of which he was imprisoned.

(*Translated.*)

Most Serene, Mighty, and Exalted Sire and Emperor Alexander Alexandrovitch, Autocrat of all the Russias, Most gracious Father:

A most humble petition from reserved Jewish soldiers and under-officers living in Moscow:

May God hear, and may the Emperor have mercy!

We, most faithful subjects, reserved Jewish soldiers and under-officers, venture to lay at the feet of your Imperial Majesty our most humble petition not to extend to us the Law of 28th March of this year, touching the transportation of Jewish artisans from Moscow and the Government of Moscow, and not to subject us soldiers, both artisans and non-artisans, to removal from these places.

May it please your Imperial Majesty to have your most gracious attention drawn to the fact that the above-mentioned Law, subjecting thousands of poor Jews to utter ruin, must press with special harshness and injustice upon us soldiers, who have borne your Imperial Majesty's service, and who, at the first call of their country, must advance again to serve the Throne and Fatherland. Deign to note, moreover, that such a heavy and degrading restriction, depriving us of the right to

live where we best may throughout the Empire, does discredit to the military calling and casts undeserved ignominy upon us, many of whom, having had the honour to serve in the Sheor regiments, have had the high privilege to wear the sign of the Most Exalted Name of your Imperial Majesty, and the names of personages of the Imperial family. Many of us have had the honour to receive, for zealous service, your Imperial "Thank you!"

The prohibition to us soldiers to live freely within the borders of our Fatherland, for which we bound ourselves by oath not to spare our lives, is deeply felt by all Jews and many Christians to be a limitation gravely inconsistent with the noble designation of soldier. Military service opens to other persons of all callings, and even to peasants, the possibility of attaining reputation, rank and nobility. To us Jews may it at least give freedom to live at peace throughout the Empire, and may it lift from us the ignominy of compulsory confinement within the "Pale of Settlement"—where the driven-together mass of Jewish inhabitants, separated from their more prosperous and civilised co-religionists to whom the Law accords privileges of free residence and rights of property, live in poverty, ignorance and evil circumstance, the unavoidable results of their calamitous condition.

A non-Jewish soldier, when going forth to fight and die for his Fatherland, may find strength in the trust that the near ones he leaves behind will be watched over by the community, and receive the paternal care of the Government, and the generous favour of the monarch. But a Jewish soldier has to face death for his Fatherland with the bitter consciousness that she has separated him as an outcast from all her other children, humiliated him, and by her laws has deprived him of the means to decently exist himself, and to provide for the family he leaves behind.

He can only pray to God that the authorities and the Government may not ascribe the offences of individual Jewish wrongdoers to a natural evil disposition in the whole nation; that they may not punish all other Jews indiscriminately because of these few; and that the Judophobe newspapers

may not, with malicious design, poison the minds of the population against us, and move the authorities to bring us into disfavour with the Government.

This is our humble prayer: may our Fatherland render us justice, and your Imperial Majesty show his exalted grace, to the end that all reserved and retired Jewish soldiers and under-officers, whether they be artisans or not, may graciously be granted the right to live unreservedly throughout the Empire, and that those who have served in the ranks during their entire term may be accorded certain small other privileges, such as the right to trade, and to enter the service of private persons and of public institutions.

Thus may be fulfilled the saying: "A prayer to God and service to the Emperor is never in vain."

Reserved Under-Officer,
ISRAEL DEYEL.

Moscow, *May* 15, 1891.

B.

THE St. Petersburg *Official Messenger* of so recent a date as August 22, 1892, published by authority a sweeping denial of all the statements hitherto made "regarding the alleged cruelties attending the expulsion of Jews from Russia. In particular, says the Reuter's despatch summarising this official utterance, the allegation that Jews were conveyed in chains from Moscow and St. Petersburg, and forced to travel on foot to their destination, and in some cases even transported to Siberia, is declared to be entirely without foundation. "In Russia," the official organ adds, "none but convicts are put in chains, and these even are not transported on foot." The journal concludes by emphatically declaring that no cruelties or acts of violence have been perpetrated against the Jews, and that all newspaper statements to the contrary are pure inventions.

In the face of this circumstantial, though strangely belated, denial, I reprint the list of 88 Jewish residents of Moscow who were marched publicly through the streets of that Holy City from the Central Forwarding Prison to the Smolenski, or

some other railway station, by what is known as the *étape*. Every name has been verified by personal investigation, and is vouched for by men of the highest respectability in Moscow. The list only partially covers the Jewish representation in the *étapes* of a few months in the spring and summer of 1891, and of course indicates only an infinitesimal fraction of those thus

THE SMOLENSKI RAILWAY STATION, MOSCOW.

outraged throughout the Empire. The women, who are distinguished by italics, wore no chains ; the men all bore manacles similar to those which are portrayed on the cover of this book. Not one of them was a "convict," or charged with any crime save that of race.

Opposite each name is the place to which that person was sent. Those towns marked (*) are not in the Pale. That means that one-fourth of these Jews were either twenty-five-year veterans or were otherwise of the privileged classes permitted since 1865 to reside anywhere, and that, when removed

from Moscow during 1891, their domicile reverted to some other place where Jews are not allowed to reside, and from which they would also in time be chased. In three cases the same name occurs twice -where people ventured back to save some relic of their property or collect a debt, and were again expelled.

	Name	*Sent to*
1.	Israel Marfis	Wilna
2.	Itzko Aisik	Novgorod.*
3.	Movscha Perschin	Mstislavl.
4.	Schelma Berlin	Mohilef.
5.	Israel Schabak	Kronstadt.*
6.	Adam Schinavitch	Novgorondsk.
7.	Itzko Reiffmann	Grodno.
8.	Elia (Evsel) Grischmann	Podolsk,*
9.	El-Baer Liachtiger	Konsk.
10.	Moissei Bieloi	Toula.*
11.	Berka Bieloi	Toula.*
12.	Meyer Blechman	Egorievsk.*
13.	*Chaia Benstein*	Mohilef.
14.	*Pessia Sverlova*	Polotzk.
15.	Srul Berkovitch	Toula.*
16.	Iovel Grischmann	Podolsk.*
17.	Piness Leif Katzev	Mohilef.
18.	*Bina Blovstein*	Libau.
19.	Israil Yonte	Orscha.
20.	Peretz Leib Cohan	Goldingen.
21.	Mendel Epstein	Vitebsk.
22.	*Rivka Krein*	Telschi.
23.	Affraim Faimann	Pokrov.*
24.	Mendel Moros	Vitebsk.
25.	Wulf Bloch	Orschmiany.
26.	Leibh Eviossar	Vitebsk.
27.	Schlema Schneeweiss	Vitebsk.
28.	*Sara Gutermann*	Orscha.
29.	*Biela Scherr*	Wilna.
30.	David Kantor	Serponkhov.*
31.	Boruch Friedmann	Igumen.
32.	Jankel Volkovitcher	Mohilef.
33.	Raphael Raitzyn	Dünaburg.
34.	Morduch Chessin	Mstislavl.
35.	Selman Spetner	Borissov.
36.	Benjamin Moskin	Mstislavel.
37.	Selig Mirschovitch	Orscha.
38.	Leiba Poliakoff	Surans.
39.	Isidor Tager	Rieschitzy.
40.	Hirsch Rabkin	Vitebsk.

Name	*Sent to*
41. Schmuel Aronovitch	Rossienny.
42. Leiser Kravitsky	Klin.*
43. Jossel Kaplan	Rossienny.
44. Jossel Chenvkin	Klimoffka.*
45. Itzko Burdess	Wilna.
46. Itzko Sterch	Tukum.
47. Abraham Bernstein	Troky.
48. Srul Krivoschief	Bobruisk.
49. Faibisch Schur	Gorky.
50. Berka Drisin	Dissna.*
51. Bentzian Sliokin	Kieff.*
52. *Bassia Riabkin*	Mohilef.
53. Faiva (her grandson of eight)	Mohilef.
54. Jehiel Veitmann	Bogoroditsk.
55. Siska Bam	Polotzk.
56. Itzko Rapaport	Egorievsk.*
57. Ruvim Blankstein	Vologda.*
58. Schlioma Streltzin	Mohilef.
59. Jankel Itelson	Orscha.
60. Salmon Goldberk	Sienny.
61. Jankel Fechtonbaum	Kadin.
62. Itzko Grünblatt	Slutzk.
63. Sachary Faveleff Starinsky	Slutzk.
64. Chaim Wolf Edelstein	Rossienny.
65. *Kivka Krein* (twice)	Telschi.
66. Jankel Galkin	Podolsk.*
67. Jossel Revsin	Klimovitschky.
68. Israel Rassner	Mohilef.
69. *Feiga Beresinova*	Mohilef.
70. Wolf Shatzkess	Grodno.
71. Elka Toffe	Dünaburg.
72. Jossiff Schmuelovitch	Orel.
73. Movscha Trotzky	Wilna.
74. Isaac Pschenitza	Warsaw.
75. Meyer Blechmann (twice)	Egorievsk.*
76. Movscha Meyer Suria	Vilkomir.
77. Evsel Grischmann (twice)	Podolsk.*
78. Indel Movscha Roschkin	Slonim.
79. Itzek Choloss	Rossienny.
80. Mordka Geldenreitik	Orschmiany.
81. Itzek Geiner Chanyss	Bratzlov.
82. Itzko Zivkin	Mstislavel.
83. Elia Bernovitsch	Toula.*
84. Herman Zeilon	Warsaw.
85. Abraham Blovstein	Vologda.*
86. *Xenia Riva Drevlovska*	Dorrogobousch.
87. Irael Denell	Orschmiany.
88. Elonor Zeilon	Warsaw.

C.

THE visible head of the almost world-wide organisation for the reception, care, and distribution of the Russo-Jewish refugees, is the "*Deutsches Central-Komitee*" at Berlin, which, oddly enough, has its correspondence addressed to No. 40 Holy Ghost Street. This central body comprises some of the most eminent Hebrew citizens of the German capital, including Justizrath Meyer, Rechtsanwalt Breslauer, and Karl Emil Franzos.

The more detailed work throughout Germany is divided into three branches or departments—East Prussia, Upper Silesia, and the Seaboard.

The *Hauptgrenzkomité* of East Prussia has its headquarters at Königsberg, and consists of the chairman of the five provincial committees of Insterburg, Prostken, Memel, Eydtkuhnen and Tilsit, under the presidency of Rabbi Dr. Bamberger, of Königsberg. The most important of these minor bodies is the frontier or *Grenzkomité* of Königsberg, which comprises 100 men and women, and is split up into eleven sub-committees, covering "sifting," lodging, clothing, commissariat, transportation, forwarding, care for the rejected, medicine, legal points, changing of money, and advice to independent travellers. The five lesser frontier committees already mentioned represent some 80 workers, who, under general direction from Königsberg, receive the fugitives direct from Russian soil.

The *Oberschlesische Hilfscomitee* in Beuthen, a town 116 miles south-east of Breslau, and the centre of a network of railways leading from Southern Poland and Cracow, is presided over by Amtsgerichtsrath Levy, and has general supervision over the small frontier "sifting" committees at Myslowitz, Ratibor, Kattowitz, Lublinitz and Laurahütte. In association with these, but organised by the *Israelitischen Allianz* of Vienna, are the Austrian frontier *Sichtungs-Komitees* of Cracow, Pod volochesk, Oswiecim, Husiatyn and Czernowitz.

Infinitely the most important of the "*Komitees an den Hafenplätzen, etc.*," is the splendidly organised and effective

Hamburg Committee. There are minor bodies of the same sort at Bremen, Stettin and Posen.

In addition to these committees engaged in actual daily contact with the great problem, there are 31 towns in Germany which have auxiliary committees formed to assist the Russian Jews.

The list would not be complete without mention of the powerful Jewish organisations in Vienna, Buda-Pesth, Paris, Antwerp, Brussels, Amsterdam, Copenhagen, Rome and Zurich, which co-operate cordially with the German central committee. London and New York, the former through its Anglo-Jewish Association, the Russo-Jewish Committee and the Committee of Deputies of the British Jews, the latter through its National Committee, the United Hebrew Association and the United Hebrew Charities, have the still more arduous and trying task of receiving this vast emigrant host after Europe has sent it forth, and finding a permanent place for it inside the pale of civilisation.

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